

TOP 25 SCREAM KINGS

BIRDS OF PREY

# CINEFANTASTIQUE®

**EXCLUSIVE  
STAR  
INTERVIEWS!**

**TOM CRUISE  
STUART GORDON  
BRUCE CAMPBELL  
KANE HODDER**

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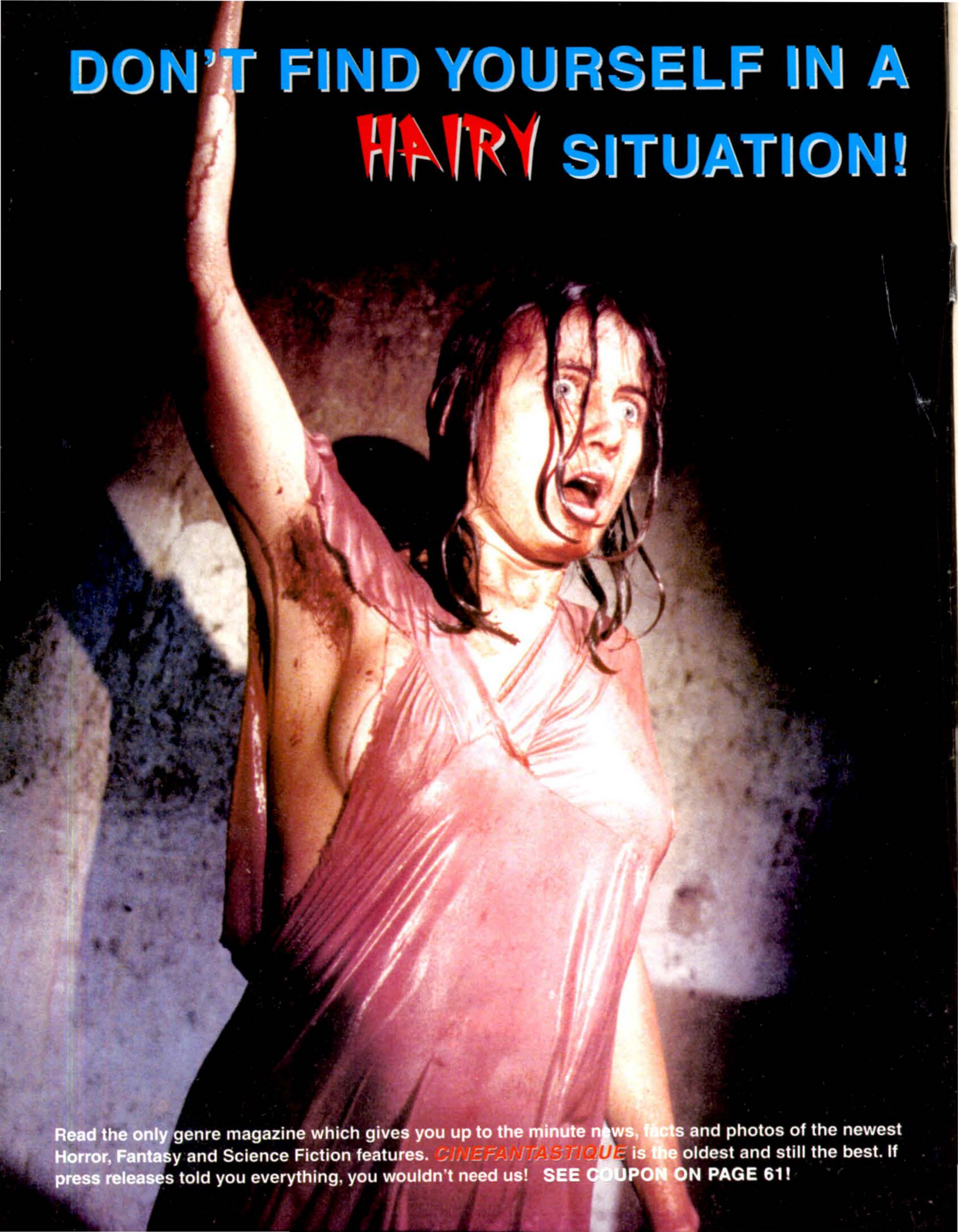
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**DAGON \* SAINT SINNER \* SIGNS  
FEARDOTCOM \* THE DEAD ZONE**

# DON'T FIND YOURSELF IN A **HAIRY** SITUATION!



Read the only genre magazine which gives you up to the minute news, facts and photos of the newest Horror, Fantasy and Science Fiction features. **CINEFANTASTIQUE** is the oldest and still the best. If press releases told you everything, you wouldn't need us! SEE COUPON ON PAGE 61!

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VOLUME 34 NUMBER 6

"The Magazine with a Sense of Wonder"

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2002

And the lesson learned on that rainy, Chicago weekend was simple, yet profound: You can spend your time rubbing elbows with the luminaries of genre filmmaking and watching great movies in a classic theater, or you can supplicate yourself before the culinary miracle that is the Chicago Dog, but not both.

I really wanted that Chicago Dog, too. The idea of a hot dog overloaded with mustard, relish, onions, lettuce, tomatoes, etc...well, how could one travel to the Windy City and *not* have one? We even got close to one of the hallowed shrines of the phenomenon, Superdawg, but it was nine o'clock in the morning, and not even I am fanatical enough to handle a wiener and fries meal before, oh, 10:31 A.M., say.

So, I had to satisfy myself with my time at the Chicago Fantastic Film Festival, staged on the weekend of June 1 within the cathedral-like Gateway Theater. I finally got to meet Stuart Gordon—really cool guy, (see Dan Scapperotti's coverage of *DAGON* on page 8)—got some talk-time with Ingrid Pitt and sat down with Joanna Cassidy for an interview (sorry, for *Femme Fatales*). And I finally got to see that ultimate of Hammer classics, *THE VAMPIRE LOVERS*. Well, I *had* to see it—Dan Scap refused to let me leave the building until I'd parked myself in that theater and lost my Ingrid Pitt cherry. (Heh. Pitt. Cherry. It's almost like humor.)

In short, no Chicago Dog, but a grand time nonetheless, thanks to Cory Glaberson and everyone at the Fest. And a suitably happy way for me to wrap up my time as editor of *Cinefantastique*. That's right: Circumstances demand that I throw my attention to personal business here in New York, and so, reluctantly, I am relinquishing my post. I wanted to thank Celeste Clarke for giving me the opportunity to prove CFQ's continuing relevance to lovers of fantastic film, and the Lisas for making the gig easy and fun. And fear not, I *will* be back, as a contributor—just like old times. You didn't think I'd go *that* easily, did you?

—Dan Persons



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## 6 BIRDS OF PREY

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# CFQ *Preview*

Compiled by Dan Persons

## **THE SANTA CLAUSE 2: THE MRS. CLAUSE** (Disney) November 1

He ain't DeNiro, but Tim Allen has an every-man vibe that's quite appealing on screen (and that lent a bit of earnest gravity to TOY STORY's Buzz Lightyear). He's back as the rooky Saint Nick in this sequel, a debut directorial effort by TV vet Michael Lembeck. This time, the jolliest bachelor is searching for a bride to maintain his Santa standing.

## **PHONE BOOTH** (Fox) November 15

Colin Farrell is held prisoner in a New York City phone booth by a sniper. The gunman must be sadistic bastard—I mean, have you ever *smelled* a New York City phone booth? Joel Schumacher directs—let's hope it's the FALLING DOWN Schumacher and not the BAD COMPANY Schumacher.

## **TREASURE PLANET** (Disney)

November 27

CG and cel animation have played together on screen before—most prominently in THE IRON GIANT—but TREASURE PLANET makes a big leap in incorporating both techniques into a single character: the part-human, part-cyborg Long John Silver. Disney's first successful live-action feature, TREASURE ISLAND, serves as inspiration for this far-future reinterpretation, just as the company's 20,000 LEAGUES UNDER THE SEA eventually led to... uh-oh... ATLANTIS: THE LOST CONTINENT. Hey, don'tcha just love that Stitch?

## **LORD OF THE RINGS: THE TWO TOWERS** (New Line)

December 18

When the lights came up at the preview screening of LORD OF THE RINGS: THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING, you could tell: If the publicists had come in and said, "We've got the other two episodes right here, but you have to watch them now," cell phone lines across New York City would have been clogged with press people canceling appointments and calling their significant others to say that they wouldn't be coming home in the near future. Such was the power of Peter Jackson's evocation of Middle Earth: Who

didn't want to return to it as soon as possible? True, not all the battle scenes satisfied—shaking the camera is not synonymous with "action sequence"—but those were minor flaws in a film that paid off fans in ways they only dreamed possible. Let the Wachowski's experiment with two sequels in one year (did they talk to Robert Zemeckis first?). If it takes a whole year to bring such rapturous visions to the screen, we'll wait in sweet anticipation.



## **HARRY POTTER AND THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS** (Warner) November 15

Take another look at the infirmary scene at the end of HARRY POTTER AND THE SORCEROR'S STONE. Even as the film's shortfalls are displayed while Dumbledore explains the story's moral in VERY SIMPLE SENTENCES, in the background, a painting of a nurse tending to a patient carries on its own rich, inner life, demonstrating the series' possible salvation if only director Christopher Columbus has the courage to delve beyond slavish adherence to the source material. Word from the set is that both director and stars (all of the leads from the first film are returning, with the addition of Kenneth Branagh as the charismatic Gilderoy Lockhart) are demonstrating more confidence and comfort in their roles on this sequel. Whether this translates to more risks taken on-screen, we'll see.



## **DIE ANOTHER DAY** (MGM) November 22

It's new Bond but old Bond: John Cleese takes over as Q, while the Aston Martin is back, albeit in a new, sleeker incarnation. Oh, and Pierce Brosnan is there, too, facing off against baddie Rick Yune and not actively dispelling rumors that this will be his last outing as 007. Halle Berry is the Bond girl in this one, though there's no word whether or not she keeps her top on this time—though we can guess.

## **DOCTOR SLEEP** Winter (First Look)

Goran Visnjic plays an insomniac telepath recruited to pursue a serial killer. Nick Willing directs—he's turning his talents to darker realms after having done the JASON AND THE ARGONAUTS and ALICE IN WONDERLAND mini-series.

## **STAR TREK: NEMESIS** (Paramount) December 13

Is it time to bid a fond farewell to the Next Generation? It would be two films shy of Classic TREK's record, but would dodge that group's bullet of having to endure jokes about beaming down with their walkers. In this one, Picard and Co. travel to Romulus to begin peace negotiations, but uncover a deadly conspiracy. That admittedly slight synopsis makes it sound a lot like TREK 6, Classic's swan-song. We're willing to believe that, once the details are better known, that analogy won't hold.

## SPACE CRUISE

### *A Star at Top of the Heap Wants to Reach Higher*

by J. Todd Foster

When IMAX filmmakers were reviewing 3-D footage for their latest film, *SPACE STATION*, they knew immediately who their narrator had to be: race car driver, pilot, sky and SCUBA diver, space buff, and astronaut-wanna-be Tom Cruise. The forty-year-old, three-time Academy Award nominee Cruise fell in love with space as a seven-year-old, watching NASA's televised moon landings. "As I kid, I just remember watching the Apollo mission, the landings," Cruise said recently at the movie's red-carpet premiere at the National Air and Space Museum. In the fall of 2001, Cruise trained with the astronauts on flight simulators at Houston's Johnson Space Center, and then viewed rough cuts of 3-D footage shot by astronauts aboard the International Space Station, under construction 240 miles above Earth since 1998. Cruise was accompanied at Johnson Space Center by his adopted children, Isabella, nine, and Connor, seven. "They loved it, they loved it," the actor said. "It had a really big impact on them."

Cruise is no stranger to thrill-seeking. In addition to rock climbing, whitewater rafting, sky and underwater diving, racing cars and flying a Pitts Special S-2B stunt plane, the actor expressed a desire to add "astronaut" to his resume. "I'd like to go, I'd like to go to the space station. Just the history of NASA: I admire what they do as astronauts, the commitment they have. They risk their lives. Wouldn't you go? I'd definitely go."

According to astronaut Scott Altman, Cruise has the right stuff. Altman has known Cruise since they filmed *TOP GUN* together in 1985. When Cruise buzzed the tower of



Having recently made bold moves into genre filmmaking with the *MISSION: IMPOSSIBLE* series and *MINORITY REPORT* (above), Tom Cruise wouldn't mind making the fantasy real with an actual flight into space.

the movie's aircraft carrier, it was actually Altman flying the F-14 Tomcat. "I thought he did a pretty good job," Altman said, as Cruise belly-laughed nearby. "He was great. We had a great time flying together."

IMAX co-chief executive officers Brad Wechsler and Rich Gelfond said Cruise didn't have to be asked twice to participate in *SPACE STATION*. "He was our first choice. He said, 'Let's do it, I'm in, I love it.' We thought immediately of Tom, because we knew that he has a love and an interest in space. We called him up. It wasn't that sophisticated: We told him what we were up to, he said, basically, 'Sounds great, can I see some of the footage, the space footage, the building of the space station in 3-D?'"

"We brought him in, showed him some footage.

He looked at it, his jaw dropped, and he said, 'I'm in, I want to do it, this is great.' It was that simple."

Gelfond said the film is not only IMAX's first foray into space with specially built 3-D cameras, but a historic document chronicling one of mankind's greatest technological achievements. "We couldn't be there for the building of the pyramids or for the Great Wall of China, but we were for this, and this is right up there."

Director Toni Myers said Cruise spent five hours narrating the film before his voice wore out. He returned on another day for an hour of touch-up work. "Tom Cruise is a space fan of the highest order," Myers said. "He's a pilot, and he's a diver, and he wants to go to space eventually. His interest in this was absolutely genuine. You could tell from his questions that

he asked the crews—they were really impressed with Tom. He had more questions than they could answer."

Instead of his usual \$20-million-plus fee for a movie, Cruise gladly accepted a small honorarium, Myers said. And what about Cruise's chances of ever getting into space? NASA Administrator Sean O'Keefe was noncommittal, but left the door open. "The wide-ranging talents we bring to the astronaut corps certainly would always be welcome. It takes a lot of training, a lot of time, to do it. Anyone who wants to qualify, we are always happy to entertain their applications."

That application may be a bit delayed. Currently enjoying the success of *MINORITY REPORT*, Cruise will next plunge into *MISSION: IMPOSSIBLE 3*, currently under development with director David Fincher.

CFQ

By Colin Kingston

**W**ith SMALLVILLE having put a new, and successful, spin on the Superman legend, it seemed only natural that comicdom's legendary Dark Knight would be next target for some "outside-the-Batcave" thinking. The result is BIRDS OF PREY, a new live-action television series for The WB. Based on the DC comic book of the same name, BIRDS OF PREY is a different look at life in Gotham City.

As Executive Producer Joe Davola explained, "The show takes place seven years after the final fight between Batman, Batgirl, and the Joker. Batgirl is shot by the Joker and basically sentenced to a wheelchair for the rest of her life. The Joker also kills Catwoman...

does not believe her about her terrible dreams."

All this is a dramatic shift from the legends depicted previous incarnations of Gotham's masked crime-fighter (although fans of the various BATMAN animated series will find some comfort in the fact that Mark Hamill once again reprises his role as the voice of the Joker), but the producers acknowledge the latitude their bosses have given them with the series. Said Davola, "After producing SMALLVILLE, we developed a really strong relationship with DC Comics. They gave us the comic book *Birds Of Prey* to take a look at, and we said it was an idea we wanted to develop."

In addition to Meyer, the cast includes Ashley Scott (DARK ANGEL) as Helena Kyle/The Huntress and Rachel Skarsten (TWICE IN A

staff does have a sense of humor about the characters and the show.

"Laeta Kalogridis (TOMB RAIDER), who is the writer of the show, created this from the characters that DC had drawn," Davola said. "She approached us wanting to have a sense of humor with the characters. I don't think these guys can take themselves too seriously, or it is going to be too stoic." Viewers will see a variety of villains. "We're going to have villain arcs through the series," said Davola. "Somebody like Harlequin will do the first year of the show. She will have other villains working for her that might just be for a two or three episode run. It gives us a lot of possibilities for good guest stars. Right now it is set up so that the Joker is in the asylum and he is basically pulling the strings on all of the

## *It's a Hot Night in Gotham When a New Breed of Crimefighters Take Over*

That same night, a young girl sees all of this in her dreams. Her name is Dinah Lance, and she will become The Black Canary. "Now we fast forward seven years to the present. Barbara Gordon, who was Batgirl, has now turned herself into Oracle. She has all of these technological devices and is there to protect New Gotham from evil. Her crime-fighting sidekick is Helena Kyle, Huntress [the illegitimate offspring of Selena Kyle and an unknowing Bruce Wayne]. Dinah Lance joins up with them and they become the BIRDS OF PREY."

Added Dina Meyer (STARSHIP TROOPERS), who plays Barbara Gordon/Oracle, "Batman has left Gotham. We believe that he has been driven crazy by the Joker. We don't know if that's the real reason he has left, but he has taken off." As is typical of the current spate of superhero adaptations, life is not all that "super" for the main characters. "In our first episode, Oracle is dealing with the loss of her legs," said Davola. "Helena is dealing with the death of her mother and the fact that her father abandoned her. Dinah, the youngest member of the trio, is dealing with coming to a strange city because her mother

LIFETIME) as Dinah Lance/The Black Canary. Shemar Moore (THE YOUNG AND THE RESTLESS) plays Detective Jake Reese, a member of the New Gotham Police Department and a potential love interest for Helena. Mia Sara (FERRIS BUELLER'S DAY OFF) plays Dr. Harleen Quinzel and arch villain Harlequin. Veteran actor Ian Abercrombie (SEINFELD) plays Alfred, the faithful butler. The casting process was a quick one for Meyer. "I was given the script on a Wednesday evening. I auditioned on Thursday morning. I found out on Thursday afternoon that I was going to be testing on Friday. About a half-hour after I tested I had the part. It was a nice way to start the weekend."

Unlike many superheroes in movies and television, these do not wear masks. Explained Davola, "It was a back and forth debate about the mask. The Huntress goes out there at night and she is in and out really quickly. We eventually decided it wasn't something we wanted to do." While this new series has followed the lead of recent television efforts and eschewed the camp factor that was the driving force of the sixties BATMAN, the writing

crime in the city."

Meyer admitted it took some time to get used to the wheelchair. "The producers thought it would be a good idea for me to navigate around and see what it was physically like to sit in a wheelchair. I had driving lessons on the Warner Brothers lot. "There is talk about Oracle being fully adept at the Filipino art of stick fighting. I think that would be really great to stay in the chair and kick ass from there. I'm very flattered to be chosen to play this role," the actress added. "I think Barbara Gordon is truly a super superhero. She went from being this sort-of ass-kicking Batgirl to losing the use of her legs. She uses her disability to become even stronger. I think that is just fantastic."

Davola sees some critical differences between SMALLVILLE and BIRDS OF PREY. "In SMALLVILLE, you really have a superhero in training. Clark is just getting the powers and learning how to deal with them smack in Middle America. What you have in BIRDS OF PREY are women who are already superheroes. They are dealing with it day in and day out and they are struggling to have a normal life at the same time."

CFQ

# BIRDS OF PREY



# DAGON

## *It's a Nightmarish Reunion When Stuart Gordon Again Joins Forces with H.P. Lovecraft*

By Dan Scapperotti

The horror stories of H.P. Lovecraft have been translated to the screen with varying degrees of success. In most cases, the films bear little resemblance to the author's arcane tales, with the bitterest blow being dealt by good ol' American International, who credited their adaptation of Lovecraft's *The Case of Charles Dexter Ward*, *THE HAUNTED PALACE*, to Edgar Allan Poe. Such a capricious attitude toward Providence's dark son could never be

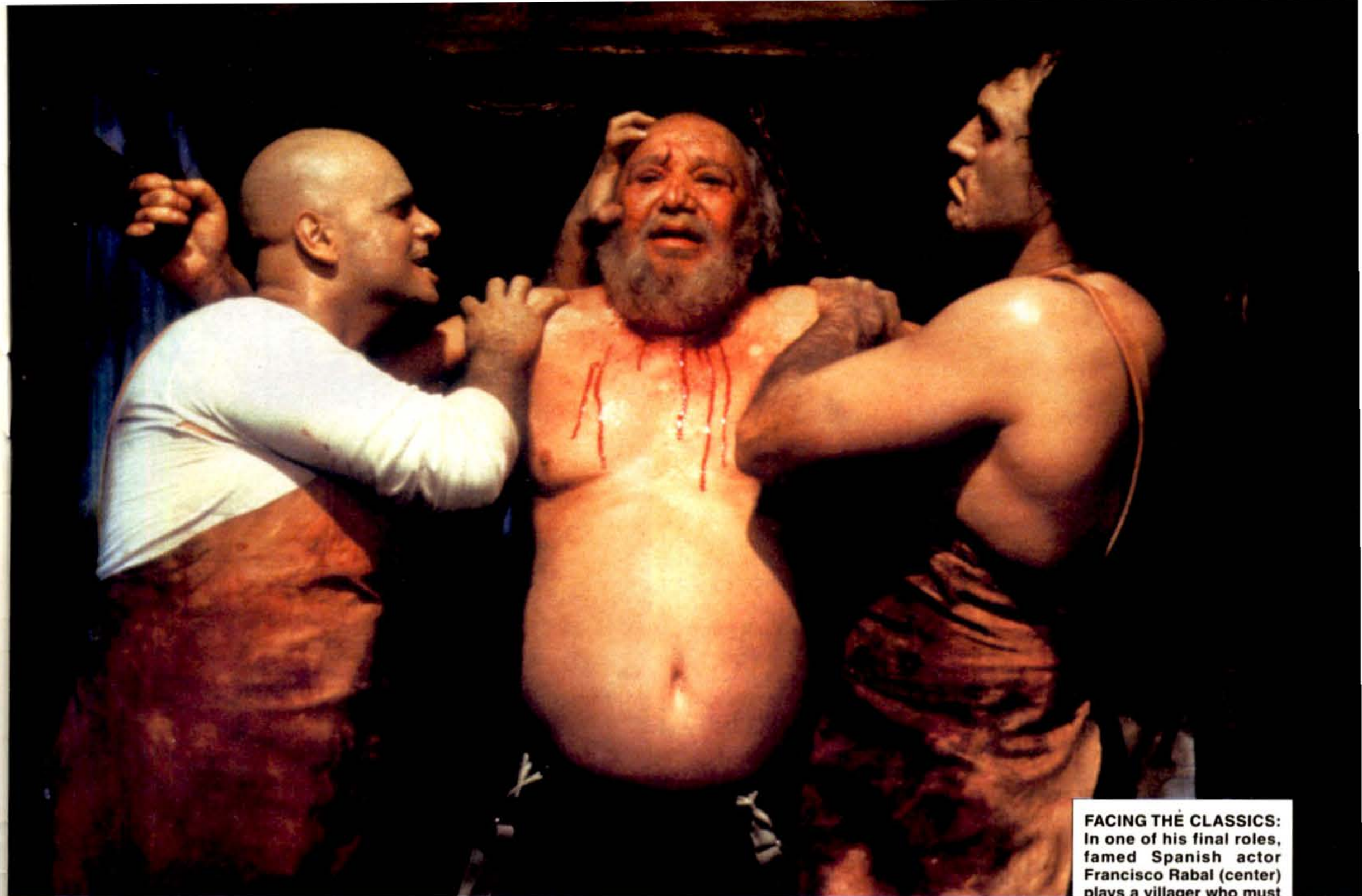
leveled at Stuart Gordon, who began his film career assembling several of the author's tales into *RE-ANIMATOR*, and returned to the author for *FROM BEYOND*, *CASTLE FREAK*, and now *DAGON*.

Based on Lovecraft's 1919 short story, *Dagon*, as well as *Shadow Over Innsmouth*, *DAGON* follows Paul, a bespectacled young man, as he unearths the horrors of the mysterious Spanish fishing village that he and his girlfriend Barbara have entered while seeking help following a calamitous boating accident. It isn't long before Bar-

bara has disappeared, Paul starts seeing strange, distorted beings in the shadows, and the dark, disturbing dreams that have haunted Paul take on gruesome life in the form of an ungodly ceremony in relation to the horrific lifeforms known only as "the Deep Ones."

The script for *DAGON* was written in 1985 by Gordon and writer Dennis Paoli, and was scheduled to be the director's follow-up to *RE-ANIMATOR*. He and producer Brian Yuzna have been trying to get the film made ever since. Availing himself

**GOING DEEP:** Stuart Gordon goes other studios tentative forays into Lovecraftian horror one better with his vision of a malevolent, aquatic lifeform ascendant.



**FACING THE CLASSICS:** In one of his final roles, famed Spanish actor Francisco Rabal (center) plays a villager who must confront the evil of the Deep Ones.

of the facilities provided by Yuzna's new, low-budget production firm, the Fantastic Factory, Gordon was finally able to lens his production on the northwest coast of Spain, in the small coastal town of Combarro.

"It's just above Portugal, on the Atlantic Ocean in an area called Galicia," said Gordon. "It's a Celtic Region of Spain, where they even play the bagpipes. It's very Lovecraftian, with lots of superstitions about witches and ghosts there. Julio Fernandez, the owner of the Spanish company, comes from that area and he recommended it."

"It's an ancient fishing village that goes back to medieval times, built on rock, and granite. On a sunny day it is very charming, but when it gets overcast it has this spooky feeling to it. We had our art department come in and board up some of the windows to make it look even more sinister than it would normally look."

"The inhabitants of the town were really great and are in some of the scenes. In the flashback scene where they're pulling in the nets, those are the real people who live in the town."

A sense of brooding dread permeates the atmosphere of the film, generated largely by the rain that constantly pelts the town and allows the inhabitants to hide their deformities beneath cloaks and rain gear. "We did use a lot of rain towers," said Gordon, "but it is extremely rainy there, anyway. It's

like the Pacific Northwest in the United States. From fall until spring, it's constantly raining. We shot this in December, and it was pouring rain all the time. We were soaking wet; it was the hardest shoot I've ever done. Fortunately, we had a good group, so they kept everyone's spirits up."

"I don't speak Spanish. I wish I did. I speak enough to get by. I was lucky that most of the actors I was able to get spoke English, although the language that they speak in that region is not Spanish, it's Gallego. There are five different languages spoken in Spain."

"Imboca is the name of the [fictional] town. It is actually a play on words, because the town in the Lovecraft story is called Innsmouth, and *im-boca* means 'in your mouth.'"

With a town full of mutants, monsters, and many a tentacled creature, the makeup de-

mands for the film were considerable. Spain's DDT Effect Specials was brought in to supply the makeup effects. "They did all the makeup effects," said Gordon. "An incredible guy named David Marci is the genius who runs that company—he got his training with Dick Smith. He's top-notch in terms of

**BRANCHING OUT:** Famed in Spain for her work in more grounded dramas, Raquel Merone makes her horror debut in *DAGON*.



prosthetic effects and mechanical effects. I was pretty involved in designing the look and working it out with him. He did an incredible job, as you can see with a town full of monsters. It took about a year to make the film and put it together."

Macarena Gomez plays Usia, the nightmarish version of a mermaid—all beauty above the waist but a mass of slithering tentacles below—who haunts Paul's dreams. When Paul first meets Usia, she's in bed and it is only when she uncovers her "legs" that he realizes the horror that confronts him. "That was a mechanical effect," Gordon explained. "The whole bottom of her body was mechanical. We used CGI for the shot where the tentacles come out of her mouth. When you see her slithering across the ground, it was a combination of the two."

The most intricate set built for the film was a dank, vaulted chamber in which the town's sacrificial victim dangles over a deep well, awaiting the not-so-tender mercies of the ravenous Deep Ones. The scene involved two sets: that above the pit, and the pit itself. "We had a great production designer by the name of Llorenc Miquel," said Gordon. "He built that pit, which was actually forty feet deep. It was interesting, because the exterior, the outside of the pit, was an actual location that we found. We built the mouth of the pit there and the actual interior of the pit was on a stage that was somewhere else. That was a large, forty-foot pit, and we were able to open up the sides to get a camera in there. It was an enormous scene. We had people set on fire and everything. That sequence took about a week to shoot."

The role of Barbara was originally written for an American actress. Gordon had casting sessions in both Los Angeles and London, but it was the beautiful Spanish ac-

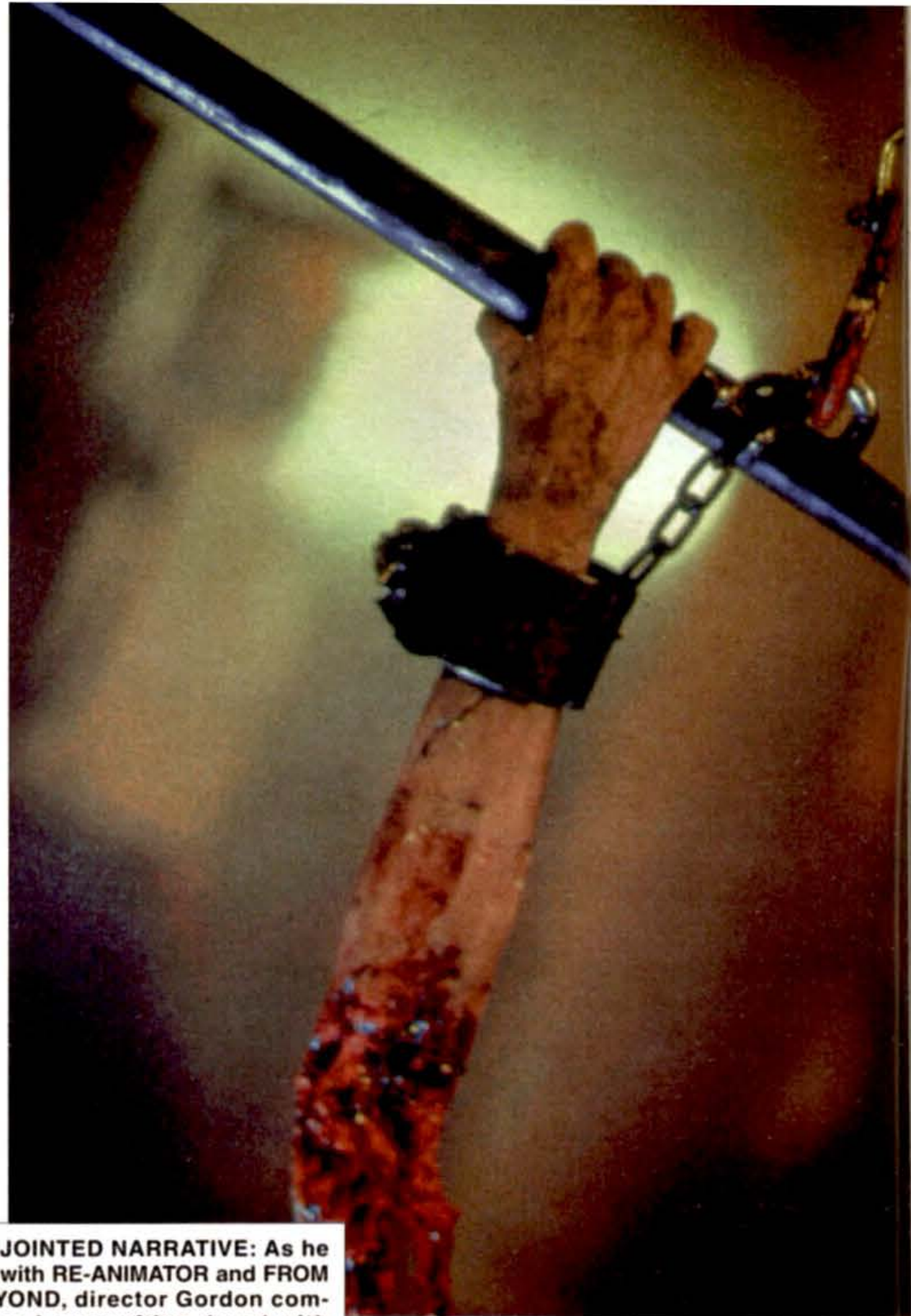
tress Raquel Merono who was cast. "When Raquel walked in and auditioned in Madrid, there was something about her that was great," said the director. "The character is a very take-charge kind of girl, and it is hard to find the right balance so the actress doesn't come off as a ballbuster, someone that you dislike, someone who is ordering this guy around all the time. Raquel was able to do it within a real sexy, charming way—there was a sense of fun about her which was great."

"She's a big television star in Spain and has been on a series, sort of a Spanish version of BEVERLY HILLS 90210—when we were going to various locations, she would be swarmed with people. She's very popular, but she has never done a film like this before and it was a real eye opener for people. She had never done nudity before, but she really appreciated the film and realized it was a chance for her to do something different. The nudity was important to the film, so she agreed to do it."

**DISJOINTED NARRATIVE:** As he did with RE-ANIMATOR and FROM BEYOND, director Gordon combines Lovecraftian dread with modern film's graphic shocks.



**TRAVEL TIP:** When visiting the seacoast villages of Spain, avoid those towns that are in the midst of their Satanic blood rites.



People may well admire Merono's form during DAGON's finale, but it will be her departure from this mortal coil that's likely to leave the greatest impression. "What a good sport she is," said Gordon. "I wanted that scene to be more disturbing. I wanted that last image of her to sort of stay with you. We joked about it and Raquel said 'I guess I'm not going to be in the sequel.' We wanted her death to really hurt. We wanted to twist expectations."

"We had so many people being set on fire in that scene that it took a full day. We had a whole stunt team doing that scene. In one sequence, we set four people on fire at once, which is rarely done. We had a great stunt coordinator."

Sadly, one of the actors didn't live to see the completed film. Francisco Rabal plays Ezequiel, one of the townsfolk who befriends Paul. "Unfortunately, he died a few months after we finished shooting," said Gordon. "We finished shooting in February, and he died in August. It was very sad, because he never got to see the finished film. He is a huge star in Spain, like Laurence Olivier—a great actor."

The weather was the biggest challenge facing Gordon and his crew. A sun-drenched sky would not be conducive to the damp gloom that overhangs the town; this

film demanded cloudy skies. "The thing that worried us the most was the weather," said Gordon. "It was one of the few movies that, if it was a sunny day, we couldn't shoot. The weather really had to cooperate, especially those scenes at the beginning on the boat where it starts out as a sunny day and then gets overcast and stormy. We were working with a real sailboat, so if it got too stormy we would worry because the boat was so close to the reef. All this stuff was beyond human control, really. Luckily, everything fell into place. There was one day when I said, 'God is my gaffer.'

"The most difficult scenes were those where Paul and Barbara are in that little inflatable raft and in the open sea. There were days when you'd think we were making *THE PERFECT STORM*—I mean, these waves were twenty feet tall. We were in a camera boat close to them, but they were on their own. We also wanted the boat to look like it was deflating, so we had half the air taken out of it and water was added so they could be bailing. It could have been a dangerous situation. Raquel is a very feisty young lady—she began whooping and laughing as if she were on a roller coaster ride. No one else could complain after she did that. She was great, and so was Enza Gaston, who played Paul. He was very strong as well."

Unusual for a film hero, Gaston's character, Paul wears glasses. "It was his idea to wear the glasses," Gordon said. "He's a huge fan of Harold Lloyd, the silent movie comedian, and we were talking about Lloyd one day and it struck me as a good image. I asked, 'Why don't you play him as Harold Lloyd,' because he had that boy-next-door thing going, the average American guy. The glasses were the next logical step. We found a pair of glasses for him. Another thing I should point out about Ezra is that he's British, and he did the whole thing with an American accent."

Another problem facing Gordon was the ability to get up to forty people in their nautical makeup—some with tentacles flapping from their faces—on-set at the same time. Each actor's makeup could take up to several hours to apply. "The region inspired a lot of the makeup," said Gordon. "They're very fond of octopus dishes there, and you see a lot of octopus and squid. It seemed fitting that the characters transform into creatures like that. There was a lot of work done—after all, the mutation of each person would be different. We kind of looked at it as an illness: These guys are in the early stages; this is more advanced; and so forth. The final stage would be where they were ready to go into the ocean. We had a guy who was a choreographer and mime who worked with the actors and showed them how to play the movements of the different characters. There was a lot of attention given to that."

"DDT did an amazing job. They started

out with those extras, putting them in makeup five hours before we started shooting—which oftentimes was the middle of the night. They would start putting the makeup on those guys at three in the morning, and by the end of the day we would have all forty of them."

Although the wide-eyed, twenty-two year-old Macarena Gomez is making her feature film debut, she has some Spanish television experience. Originally a dancer with extensive ballet training, Gomez studied acting in London—consequently, her English is excellent. This was a boon to the non-Spanish-speaking Gordon. As soon as the director saw Gomez he knew he had found his Usia. "Those enormous eyes of hers were wonderful," he said. "She has an otherworldly quality, and she's absolutely tiny. She has innocence about her but something evil as well, which is a real interesting mixture. When we were at a couple of fantasy festivals, people were comparing her to Barbara Steele. "She was also extremely brave. We were shooting her mermaid stuff in a tank. The water was freezing cold, and we were trying

to warm it up. She had a stunt double who went in the water and jumped out immediately and said, 'This is too cold, I can't do this.' I went to her and I told her that her stunt double had refused to work in the tank unless we warm it up. I assumed she would do the same, but she asked to try it and she ended up doing the whole scene. She's a wonderful actress with a great attitude. That was the thing about this shoot: It was the most physically demanding shoot I've ever done, but the people involved were so terrific it turned out to be great fun."

While Lions Gate prepares to release *DAGON*, Gordon, is preparing Lovecraft's *The Thing on the Door* with Dennis Paoli as his next project.

CFQ

**OTHERWORLDLY ENTITIES:**  
Above: Stuart Gordon (left) with author Dan Scapperotti. Below: Spanish actress Macarena Gomez.



# feardot

## Back-Slashes Can Kill When the

By Fred Topel

What could be scarier than stumbling across a website with naked pictures of your mother? Try a website that kills you. Such is the premise of FEARDOT.COM, the horror film in which a cop (Stephen Dorff) and a Department of Health investigator (Natascha McElhone) examine a website whose visitors all die within forty-eight hours of viewing the page. The site inspires hallucinogenic manifestations of each viewer's own personal fear, and the visions always prove fatal.

Director William Malone (HOUSE ON HAUNTED HILL) said that the Internet is an untapped resource for horror. "I just think it's one of those things that we're so familiar with that it's the last thing you think about when you think about something that might be scary. Usually, the things that are scary in films are the things that you don't come across very

often. I saw it as a challenge: taking something that's a normal everyday element and finding some way of making it frightening."

Producer Moshe Diamant hired Josephine Coyle to write the script. Her researches uncovered the idea that energy is neither created nor destroyed, leading her to decide that the force behind the Fear.com slaughter would be the spirit of a murdered woman seeking revenge on her killer. However, the original idea began as a more erotic horror vehicle. "A 'sexy woman on the Internet' piece was the original request," Coyle said. "A sexy woman on the Internet is luring people and killing them"—that was the original idea with Moshe. He thought this would be a great idea for Zalman King—who's obviously very experienced in the sexy, erotic side of things—to direct. That was the genesis of it, and then I played around with the idea and got fascinated by the possibilities of the inter-

net—it's a perfect conduit for energy. I wondered why someone would be killing people, and it grew from there. It grew on a much bigger scale than we originally thought.

"I gave [Diamant] the first pass of the script with that whole idea of a woman's energy coming back for revenge. If you die in an extremely violent way, where would your energy go, and what would you do? I certainly would like to think I'd come back for revenge."

This woman's energy is seeking the man who killed her online because the Internet itself was a catalyst for her demise. She made the unfortunate choice of meeting Alistair Pratt (Stephen Rea) through the net, and he turned out to be a violent stalker. Rea saw the challenge of creating a unique screen villain, and chose to remove all emotion from Pratt. "It's kind of common to have an emotionally maimed villain who compensates by

killing people," Rea said. "That's a regular figure. [In the film,] it's not explained psychologically, except that he says, 'I know what I'm supposed to feel. I just don't feel it.' In a way, I wanted to grope in the dark, because I wanted it to not feel like Vincent Price. I was just trying not to do it with the obvious kind of relish that Vincent Price would bring to it, or the deliberately self-conscious thing. It's difficult with the villain thing to try and be something that's original and real and genuine. I was trying to do something a bit fresh."

Rea felt the Internet was a perfect vehicle for horror because he bears some fears of the technology himself. "Here's the Internet, that really nobody knows where it's going. It is pretty horrific in a way. I think the film gets that, how we're not actually controlling this thing that we've created. I can't even touch it. I don't know anything about it. It's kind of a weird thing, the implications of it. All these isolated people in rooms having experiences which are not really experiences.

They're just images. It's kind of weird. Communication is opening up, but at the same time people are getting more and more alone, really."

Malone did some rewrites on Coyle's script, but credited her work as the basis for his interest in the project. "It was the idea behind it which I thought was fun. A lot of the elements that were initially in there were the Internet and [idea of] one of the past victims seeking revenge. I thought those were interesting ideas. The changes really had a lot to do with the ending of the picture, because I felt the original script didn't have a solid ending that paid everything off. I was involved in that, plus I really changed a

A NEW SKIN FOR WINAMP? Natascha McElhone and Stephen Dorff discover online horror in FEARDOT.COM.



# com

## Stalker's as Close as Your PC

lot of the way the images work in the film. Originally, it didn't really have a lot of hallucinogenic images and that was something that I really wanted in the film. I wanted it to be about what you think you see and what you see in your head, so that was a lot of what the changes were about.

"Also, I thought the film should have a sense of sadness and melancholy, something a lot of these films miss out on. I think it gives the film a different spin, something you haven't seen before. I hope it's something that the people will like."

Coyle related how

**DEADLY DOWNLOADS:** Logging on may fulfill your fantasies or end your life in this mix of technology and supernatural shocks.



her early characterization of the cop turned the character into one of the film's key roles. "I always had the cop, the Stephen Dorff character. He was the cynical cop who didn't believe what was going on or didn't want to believe the paranormal aspect of it. Then that grew, and it was more the relationship between himself and the protagonist girl. He became an equal character at that stage."

FEARDOTCOM won't be the first horror film released to deal with the Internet. Danny Draven's *HORRORVISION* (2000) and *HELL ASYLUM* (2001) both tackled the subject, while the more recent *H A L L O W E E N : RESURRECTION* (in an uncanny similarity to

*HELL ASYLUM*) uses a webcam broadcast as its device for Michael Myers' return, and the obscure *WWW.WATCHUSDIE.COM* sets its slasher scenario in a "voyeur dorm"-type enterprise. However, Malone's not afraid of the competition: "My belief is if you gave two filmmakers the same script, you'd wind up with completely different movies. Even if our stories were similar, which I suspect they're not, that doesn't bother me."

In preparing the film, Malone researched Internet sites purportedly offering up streaming "snuff" video murders like those webcast on the FEARDOTCOM's fictional site. "I doubt [it's real], although there are some really strange things on the Internet if you've cruised through there. There's some stuff that's probably marginally legal."

Rea did not do any Internet research to prepare for his character. "It wouldn't have done

me any good. I don't even know how to switch [a computer] on. I suppose very meticulous actors would say it was disgraceful that I didn't learn anything about it. I don't always believe in research. Talking to the writer was my research."

Malone's own research focused on horror films of the 1920s and 1930s, to find a tone for the modern tale. "I'm a great believer in [the theory] that nothing's really new. There's a lot of great, old stuff that is very inspirational, particularly the German expressionist films of the '20s and '30s. The silent films are great and mostly overlooked—things like *FAUST* and *CABINET OF DR. CALIGARI*. Those films have a kind of hallucinatory feel to them [that comes from the] photography and the fact that these people were on a trip with this German expressionist bent that they had. When you look at them, even today, you go, 'How did

they do that?" The effects and just the look are so interesting. "I tried to incorporate as much of that as possible. On this film, we went to a digital internegative, which means that we shot the film in Super 35mm and then we transferred the entire movie into the digital world and did all the color corrections and color timing in a digital workspace. What came out of that was we were able to do things like de-saturate the colors so the film has almost a monochromatic feel to it, even though it's a color film."

With part of the film's location shoots being based in Luxembourg, the European feel wasn't hard to come by. "The picture is supposed to take place in New York, so we wound up building everything," Malone said. "Being in Europe gave it a very different spin, because no matter what you do, you're using European elements. I think it gave it kind of

a cool look, because what we really were going for was something that would have sort of a 1930s look, again influenced by those films. It's as though the film was taking place in the 1930s, even though it was a modern film."

Malone decided a unique mood that permeated the entire film would be the most effective route to all-out fear. "I

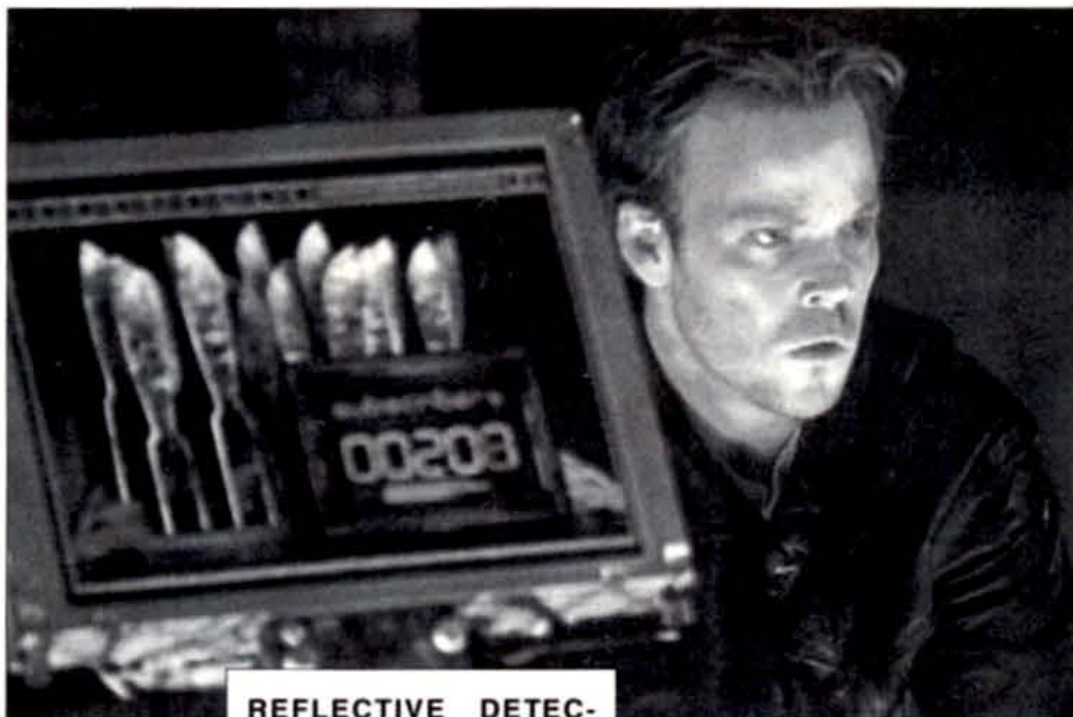
think horror is all about the same things. A lot of it's about what you don't see and what's in your head. I think that's what we're trying to do with this picture: We give you a sense of suspense and a sense of dread. What the film has is a sense of creeping dread, which is part of the horror. Horror really is always about suspense, and what you think is gonna happen. The

mix of mainstream stars and genre icons—BLADE's Stephen Dorff is the lead, matched by RONIN and TRUMAN SHOW's Natascha McElhone. Rea is the villain, and Udo Kier (MARK OF THE DEVIL) and Jeffrey Combs (RE-ANIMATOR) co-star. "In the casting on the picture," said Malone, "we were looking for just good actors and people who would be believable in the roles. I had seen Stephen Dorff from a picture called BACK-BEAT, the film about the Beatles. I thought he was quite good in that, and then of course saw him in BLADE and thought he would be an interesting guy to play our lead. We went after him and we were fortunate enough to get him. He's got kind of a boyish charm, and our character was supposed to be a New Yorker, so he was really able to pull that off. He's somebody that you immediately like."

"When you do horror films or thrillers or a genre like that, generally you don't have a lot of time for character development, because that's not really what the movies are about. You don't have an hour and a half of just character development, so you have to use a shorthand. You have to have characters that you immediately like."

Horror films have a long tradition of strong female protagonists (at least, those films that don't showcase women who like to wander into darkened basements with broken flashlights), so McElhone's character had to bring something new to the table. "You just have to find your own voice for that character," Malone said. "That again comes out of casting. You have to find somebody who you can cast who can come up with something that's unique to them. In our film, our girl is somebody from the Department of Health, and I don't think that's any character that we've ever seen before. She gets involved because she thinks it's some sort of disease that's going on, then because of the events, gets caught up and winds up becoming her own sort of detective."

"Natascha has a kind of warmth and humanity that I thought was really good. She just really has a kind of warmth



**REFLECTIVE DETECTIVE:** Stephen Dorff (above) learns that the Web can kill while tracking a high-tech murderer.

film really isn't very violent in the sense that you see a lot. It's violent in the sense of things imagined, things that are lurking in the dark, things unseen."

With a story line that, for once, wasn't about a slasher mutilating bodies, the call for on-screen gore was minimal. A combination of CG effects and practical, in-camera effects portray the violent hallucinations that induce death. "We have more computer effects in this than I had on HOUSE ON HAUNTED HILL," Malone said. "But still, in all, we used a lot of in camera effects which I'm very fond of. I think they have a tendency to look more immediate and real. We ultimately wound up having to do some on the computer because a lot of the elements are things that people see in their mind. It's hallucinogenic images, and we were using a lot of stuff to combine elements. Actually, a lot of effects in the film are things that you probably won't even know are effects—they were just things to combine elements that would normally be composited on an optical printer."

FEARDOTCOM has a





and personable quality."

Rea became involved because he had previously worked for producer Diamont on *THE MUSKETEER*. Malone explained, "Moshe had come to me and suggested Stephen Rea, which was not anybody I had thought of, to be quite honest. Of course I had seen Stephen Rea in a number of things, and I thought it was a great idea. Then we hoped we'd be able to get him to play this, because his part is just such a cold character. I didn't know if Stephen Rea would want to play that kind of character. He did."

"We were just very lucky to get him. When people see it, it's the most chilling performance they've seen. He's just great. He plays the character in a really interesting way. We've seen so many villains that it's a hard thing to come up with something fresh. Stephen Rea really came up with a fresh approach. It's something that I can't even explain, really. He's so cold, but yet interesting. He could be just cold and dull, but he's not at all. He's unrepentant in his evil. In fact, if we have any problem with the film at all, it would just be that people are unprepared for that performance. He's just so good."

Having starred in horror films like *INTERVIEW WITH THE VAMPIRE*, Rea contrasted *FEARDOTCOM*'s realistic killer to the melodramatic vampire. "It is rather different. The thing about *INTERVIEW WITH THE VAMPIRE* was I played the actor vampire—you could have a lot of fun with it. But it was very self-consciously dramatic, the whole vampire thing."

"This guy in *FEARDOT-*

*COM* is kind of seedy, like a modern serial killer. That's what he is really. I did do another film about a serial killer called *CITIZEN X*—which was an HBO film—and it does remind me of that a bit, except that it's not as naturalistic. It takes a lot of elements that make people slightly nervous or that people are anxious about, and it sews them together in a not necessarily naturalistic way. As a film, it constantly unsettles you. There is no point where you feel safe. In most horror films, there's a little island of safety somewhere. There's some character that you know if the girl is with that character, it's going to be all right. There aren't any points of safety in *FEARDOTCOM*. It's terrifying the whole way."

Jeffrey Combs has become something of a Malone staple since the HBO series *PERVERSIONS OF SCIENCE*—they got along so well that Malone always tries to find a role for him. However, Combs' character in *FEARDOTCOM* is not his usual eccentric. "I really wanted to give him a different role than we've seen him in. He actually plays

**PSYCHOTIC UPGRADE:** Stephen Rea (above) gives a new spin on the slasher mythos in *FEARDOTCOM*.



kind of a burned-out detective who's a little bit sleazy. He's just wonderful in the film, and everybody who's seen it just thinks it's a great part for him. He really plays a smarmy, washed-out detective and he's terrific."

Kier's character sets up the idea of evil on the Internet in the film's early scenes. "I had

seen Udo in so many different things over the years and I just think he's a modern day Peter Lorre. I thought that he's just got to be in the movie. He doesn't have a big role in our film, and Udo is such a well-known actor that I was really afraid he wouldn't want to do the film."

"He plays Polidori, a guy who writes a book called *The Secret Soul of the Internet*, about the hidden things that if you find the right buttons and the right addresses, you'll wind up in some sort of Hell. At the beginning of the movie, he's clutching

this book and walking through the dark subway station and he just looks like a man on the edge who's just been pulled through a keyhole, or something. He's so strong in the beginning of the film that he really kicks it off in a good way."

Originally scheduled for a May, 2002 release, *FEARDOTCOM* opened on August 31. **CFQ**

# signs

## Mel Gibson and Co. Get a Taste of the Outer Limits

By Denise Dumars

**M**. Night Shyamalan's latest film, *SIGNS*, takes a contemporary phenomenon as its focus: the mystery of crop circles. First sighted on farms in Britain, these mysterious designs, made from flattening fields of grain into patterns as simple as triangles or as complex as fractals, were thought to be made by aliens. Crop circles have now been largely exposed as hoaxes. Yet crop circle fans still believe that at least some of the designs are not man-made.

In *SIGNS*, Graham Hess, portrayed by Mel Gibson, is a minister whose wife was killed in a car wreck, causing the man to question his faith. "He's trying to live a normal life and take care of his family on the farm," said producer Frank Marshall (WHO FRAMED ROGER RABBIT, BACK TO THE FUTURE, POLTERGEIST). "They grow corn: he has two kids. His brother, played by Joaquin Phoenix, has moved in with him, as people do to be of support for the family in a time of tragedy. They're trying to do the normal day to day stuff, when the crop circles start showing up and weird things start happening."

"At first Hess thinks it's a prank. He calls the police and makes a report. But then, as things escalate, it becomes a different situation, and protecting his family from what is an outside force becomes necessary. Crop circles are signs for many things—once again, both outside and inside forces. As symbols they're all very complex and multi-leveled, as Night's stories always are... The danger is both psychological and physical, and it escalates into an extreme physical danger."

Marshall denied that *SIGNS* is the third installment in Shyamalan's "Philadelphia Trilogy." "That has nothing to do with any-

thing. His first film was shot in that area, too. He writes his own stories and he likes to place them in an area that's close to home, because he likes to be near his family. He picked Bucks County, in this one, which is outside Philadelphia. We never even go into downtown Philadelphia in this film. It's definitely a ways out of town."

Most of Night's movies—genre or not—seem to have a metaphysical and/or religious theme. "I'd say that's true," Marshall said. "He's a wonderful writer. His characters are so deeply drawn, and in this film the crop circles are the outside forces working on the characters—in this case, Mel Gibson's character—whose inner forces are his loss of his faith and how he deals with that. Night tries to explore these things in all of his characters and in all of his movies."

"I think it's Night's scariest movie to date—but it's also his funniest! There's a whole element of humor that you haven't seen in his work before."

Both of Shyamalan's prior films, *THE SIXTH SENSE* and *UNBREAKABLE* made effective use of star Bruce Willis, an actor who excels at comedy, yet rarely cracked a smile in either title. This is not the case with Mel Gibson's character. "Both Gibson and Phoenix have comedic turns in this film," said Marshall. "Gibson does great takes, with great looks, that are very funny. Joaquin is sort of the everyman in the movie, saying, 'Wait a minute, what's really going on here?' He's playing the audience. So his questions are kind of funny."

"You haven't seen him in this kind of role



before. He and Gibson really seemed like brothers; it's amazing. They had such a bond and a connection to each other."

So this is a film with religious overtones built around a phenomenon most frequently associated with Ancient Astronauts. Clearly Shyamalan wasn't a color-within-the-lines type in grade school. "Night likes to explore the genres in an unusual way," Marshall affirmed. "In *THE SIXTH SENSE* he explores the ghost story; in *UNBREAKABLE*, the comic book superhero; and in this one, science fiction."

"It's in the spirit of a Hitchcock movie. For example, Night ran *THE BIRDS* for us the week before we started shooting. He likes to run a movie before principal photography to get us in the mood for the kind of genre we're in. It's a thriller with science fictional overtones."

Will the film make us think one way or another about UFO's? "I think it will leave the question open. This is just my view, but we are not alone. I just can't imagine that somewhere, out there in the



fects—no one was trying to remake CLOSE ENCOUNTERS. "The crop circles are all real; no computer effects," said Marshall. "[Shyamalan] didn't want to cheat on that. We actually had crop circles out there in Bucks County. I think you have to be careful with the computer animation; it's not the end-all, it's a tool. The best special effects are the ones you don't know are there."

universe, there isn't life. I don't know if we've been visited yet, but I can imagine that when we see the shots from space that, well, somebody else out there must be doing something similar as well. It's a giant question, but we definitely talk about it in the film: what they might be doing if they came to visit us; that kind of thing."

Unlike the teeming populations of Shyamalan's two prior films, SIGNS is a more intimate effort. "It's very much like THE BIRDS," said Marshall, "in that it all takes place in one location, pretty much, with a very small cast. There's a character played by Cherry Jones, the local constable, and a couple of people in town we run into in the film. But it's basically Mel, Joaquin, and the two kids."

Since it is basically Hess' family that is affected in the film and not the whole of Bucks County, for example, the reality of what is happening is called into question. "You might question yourself when you see the film," Marshall suggested. "Is this really happening or not? Anything's a possibility here."

Yet this ambivalent nature is achieved without a heavy reliance on special ef-

Marshall had high praise for Shyamalan's filmmaking technique. "Night is fantastic to work with. He's so well organized that there's not a lot for the producer to do. It's a very calm set, and Night likes to create a family atmosphere. We have functions



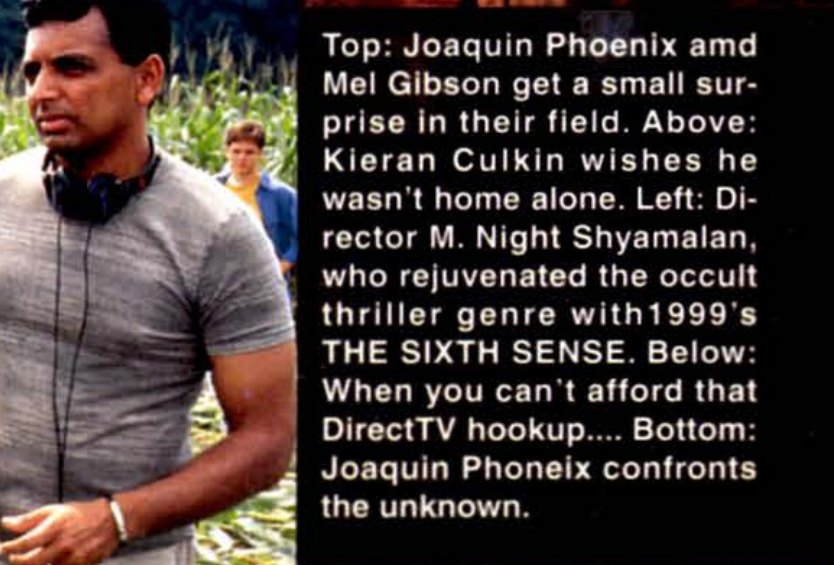
Top: Joaquin Phoenix and Mel Gibson get a small surprise in their field. Above: Kieran Culkin wishes he wasn't home alone. Left: Director M. Night Shyamalan, who rejuvenated the occult thriller genre with 1999's THE SIXTH SENSE. Below: When you can't afford that DirectTV hookup.... Bottom: Joaquin Phoenix confronts the unknown.



every week. It's something that [Executive Producer Kathleen Kennedy] and I have always done, and Night is very much the same way. Everybody is included in everything. It's a very warm atmosphere, and it does start at the top: very reasonable hours; weekends off—it's great."

While Marshall was careful to distinguish SIGNS from Shyamalan's previous work, there was one aspect of the director's oeuvre that the producer, and probably the whole of the Disney Company, hoped would be replicated. "This is another of Night's movies that you'll want to see twice," Marshall said. "In THE SIXTH SENSE there were clues about what was really happening all through the film. In this film, there are clues all the way through about what is happening too. Once you see it, go back and see it again. You'll appreciate it so much more."

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# SAINT SINNER

## *Succubii Go Wilding as Clive Barker Comes to Cable*

By Mike Watt

Director Joshua Butler got his start on the short-lived television series *GOOD VS. EVIL* [a.k.a. "G VS. E"]. While that effort has long since left the airwaves, its theme is evergreen, and potent enough for Butler to revisit in *SAINT SINNER*, a new film based on a story by legendary horror writer Clive Barker (*HELLRAISER*), adapted by screenwriter Doris Egan, and produced for the Sci-Fi Channel.

"This is certainly no Disney movie," Butler said with a laugh. "The script is based on a treatment that Clive wrote a few years ago. There's an ancient monastery at the edge of civilization that keeps all these artifacts from the centuries. One of these is this orb that has captured the souls of two female demons (played by Rebecca Harrell and Mary Mara). A young monk in 1815 (Greg Serano) accidentally releases these demons onto the world, two hundred years into the future. He is then asked, by God and the rest

of the monks, to travel through time to our modern-day Pacific Northwest and stop these demons who have taken human form and are going on a rampage across civilization, sucking the life out of all the victims they encounter. Along the way, the monk teams up with this female cop (Gina Ravera) who, of course, doesn't believe in anything spiritual, doesn't believe in anything supernatural. He basically teaches her to believe in the spiritual, and the two of them ultimately have to call upon their inner resources to stop these demons and prevent the world's doom."

Pretty heady stuff for prime-time television, even if it is cable. Still, Butler said that, as a fan of Barker's, he not only jumped at the chance to direct one of the author's original stories, but lobbied for the job. "I'm a huge Clive Barker fan, and I'm a major film junkie. I've been making films ever since I was a kid. I'm a huge fan of the horror movie, and my two favorite



**DEEP-DOWN HUNGER:** A pair of ravenous demons make the world their buffet in Clive Barker's cable debut, *SAINT SINNER*.



horror directors are Clive Barker and David Cronenberg. Both Clive and I share a love of Cronenberg.

"When I was auditioning for the job, I read the script and I knew what I could do with it within the context of Clive's work. It's tough to create a modern horror movie that doesn't borrow heavily from other elements, yet Clive really felt, when I met with him, that we had to try to do things that we haven't seen yet. It's been a struggle to make it as original as possible. I think we're succeeding.

"The interesting thing is going onto a set and trying something that you've never tried before. Taking risks in terms of performances, in terms of camera style, camera angles, film stocks, and ultimately the nature of horror. Guiding a performance that,

perhaps, there may be no template for it. But I guess I'm just a risk-taking individual, and I enjoyed the risks of this project."

Barker, who carries the credit of Executive Producer on SAINT SINNER, is known for being ferociously original when it comes to imagery. He was the one who toyed with the idea of sexual sadism taken to demonic levels in HELLRAISER, and pitted a hard-boiled detective against otherworldly magicians in LORD OF ILLUSIONS. While Barker, as a filmmaker himself, has often been hamstrung by low budgets, he still manages to present his audiences with concepts and stories that seem brand new.

Butler agreed wholeheartedly. "I think the great thing about Clive's work is that there is always this element of legend to it, there's a timelessness to his stories, in a certain sense. Not only do they take place across the centuries, but they also have basic themes of good versus evil, to the point where everything takes place on a larger-than-life scale, yet the so-called "saints" and "sinners" [are presented] as real as possible. We're trying to create, with Clive's assistance and his vision, a new breed of female demon for the screen that we haven't seen before. [They are] incredibly sexually charged, almost drug-addicts in the sense that their drug is everything around them, the world around them. Their senses are heightened, and they have to suck the life out of every room they're in, every object they encounter, and every human that crosses their paths. They're just ravenous, ravenous creatures. So ultimately, once that's set up in an almost mystical way, the film really takes off and really commits to the horror of

what these two women are doing and the need to stop them.

"I have two very courageous actresses, and we're embarking on a process here that all three of us have our fears about. We're all doing something, as per Clive's vision, that has never been done before, in terms of the nature of these characters and these demons. [Harrell and Mara] have to be extremely brave and take risks as performers. They have to deal with these very specific and gruesome elements...that I've been told not to talk about. [Laughs.]

"Specific elements in certain set-pieces in the film are incredibly gruesome. As



**ON A MISSION FROM GOD:** Gina Ravera (upper right) as a skeptical cop and Greg Serano (lower left) as a faithful monk must join forces to battle the depredations of demons in present-day Pacific Northwest.



actresses and as a director on a set, when you're guiding the process, you have to stay as far away from campiness as possible, because that's the danger. You can fall into a kind of self-parody without thinking about it. So it's constantly fighting against that, trying to find within the emotional context of these two creatures a kind of human element, a universal relationship I think viewers can identify with as human beings, even though the characters are not human."

Still, again, this is basic cable. Even though the boundaries are pushed with every project, there are some things you still can't do on television. "The Sci Fi channel need-

ed us to pull back in terms of certain elements, like sexuality and profanity," said Butler. "I'm confident that the Sci Fi Channel is going to support a lot of things that have never appeared on basic cable in their pure form, at least in terms of gore and horror. It will be interesting to see what ends up on the screen. But the good thing is, I'm also simultaneously doing the proverbial, unrated director's cut. In that way, I haven't had to censor myself — at least I can preserve what I originally shot in some form. It's thrilling.

"The one thing that Clive sort of charged me with as a filmmaker is to never censor myself. Never hold back from whatever. Try to push the envelope as much as I could. It would have been impossible to try and work within the parameters of a sheet of paper from Basic Cable's Standards and Practices, without knowing that there would be no outlet for what we were doing."

While Barker was not present on the Vancouver set for the actual filming, he and Butler worked closely together throughout pre-production, discussing the imagery and legend that comprises the foundation of SAINT SINNER. "The good thing," said Butler, "is that Clive is a filmmaker and he respects filmmakers, so he has given me a lot of freedom to explore my vision of the

# SAINT SINNER

## Allan Magled

### SPECIAL EFFECTS

By Mike Watt

Clive Barker's **SAINT SINNER**, airing in October on the Sci Fi Channel, is not a CGI-intensive film. There are a handful of effects that will require a digital touch, and that touch will be handled by the Toronto-based Soho vfx Studio.

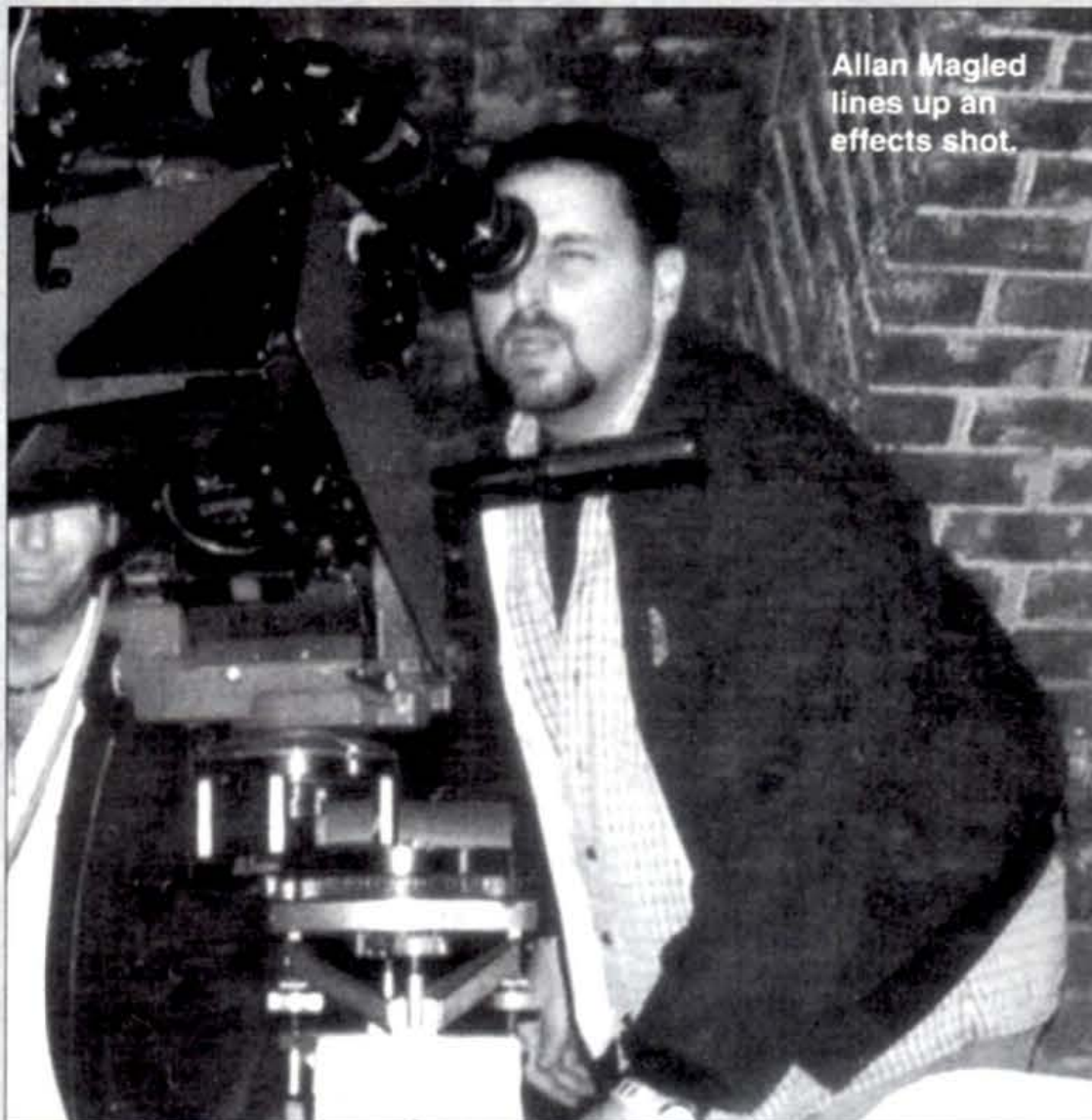
Soho's Allan Magled served the production as the Visual Effects Supervisor. "My role on set is to supervise shots that require a digital effect, and figure out exactly how to achieve them," said Magled. "If someone is standing in front of a green screen, I would be there to make sure that he or she is lit properly so that we can extract the actor from the green background and place him into a computer generated environment. That's the most primitive and basic form of it, but then it gets into more elaborate things. We have a particular shot in the movie where one of the characters twists her head around 360 degrees. We'll shoot her in two places, in front of a green screen and actually in the shot. In the shot, she'll be acting away, but she'll have a green hood on her head. Once we get that footage into the computer, we'll remove the head by keying out the green. Then we'll shoot her again in front of a green screen and actually turn her around on a rig, so that she turns 360 degrees. We'll just remove her body digitally and we'll take her head and put it into the other shot. Thus: head twist. But all that has to be lined up with cameras. We have to make sure that everything is measured exactly the same so that perspective and lighting

will match, and it will line up correctly. It can be tricky."

This is all instinct for Magled, who has worked in one capacity or another on such shows as **BETWEEN STRANGERS**, **THE CAVE-MAN'S VALENTINE**, and **NUTTY PROFESSOR II: THE KLUMPS**. On the other hand, **SAINT SINNER** is a movie of a different color. "This is the darkest [show I've worked on]. This is definitely horror, with lots of blood and gore. We're creating a lot of spine-chilling effects for **SAINT SINNER**. I haven't really handled horror much in the past, so I'm really excited about doing the effects on this project."

Not that he was daunted by the genre. "If horror's done well, sure I'm a fan. I'm easy; I like everything. And this is looking good so far."

While most of **SAINT SINNER**'s effects—used to tell the story of a pair of demons who feed off the life-energies of contemporary males and who are pursued by a nineteenth century monk—are achieved through practical puppets and make-up, Magled and Soho have been brought aboard to take care of the film's digital needs. "There are a lot of really nice CG shots in it," said Magled, "but they are there to serve the story, rather than movies that revolve around the effects, the CG element of it. A lot of the shots are different than shots we've done before, but we're not doing any kind of ground-breaking technology. We're doing all the stuff that you can't do [practically]. The 'Time Portal' sequence would be difficult to achieve practical-



Allan Magled lines up an effects shot.

ly, and you can't twist a real actor's head around. Well... you could, but they'd be dead. They're not too good with killing the actors. Maybe when they're done shooting, but if you do it and they're needed the next day, you're in for it."

**SAINT SINNER** marked the first project for Soho's feature film division, which also counts among its creative staff technical director Michael Wile, vfx producer Michael Kowalski and software engineer Berj Bannayan (who created the "pin table" sequence for **X-MEN**). Magled had no complaints about the horror production. "In this particular instance, the director, Joshua Butler, and the producer, Oscar L. Costo (**PRANCER RETURNS**), [are] really good guys to work with.

If we come up with something we think would help a particular effects shot, we'll sit down and discuss it. It makes the whole process a lot easier. Obviously, you always have preferences as to who you would like to work with, and it's always been a great experience working with Josh and Oscar.

"We are trying to head down the road to become a boutique effects shop. We're not interested in competing with huge effects studios, where we would take on 400 shots. We would rather take on the money shot, the one big shot in the film, and put a heavy crew on that, and make it shine. I think that's what we're more interested in: Give us a few shots that you really, really want to shine, and that's what we can do." CFQ



Star Greg Serrano (left) works with director Joshua Butler.

film and bring what I bring to the party. But he is a truly brilliant man, and it would be foolish of me not to take advantage of somebody like that, someone who is your Executive Producer and who ultimately can provide such wisdom and be a sounding board, filmmaker to filmmaker, as problems arise. I've had many, many hours of discussion during pre-production. Then, during production, I usually speak to Clive on the weekends and I tell him what's going on. He seems happy, and that's the important thing."

While Butler's spirits seemed to be up as he talked, he admitted that SAINT SINNER was also a difficult experience for all involved. "It has been a process. On a show like this, you're not blessed with weeks and weeks of rehearsal. You're blessed with possibly a few days of rehearsal, because of the nature of the schedule and the budget. When we get onto the set, we have to be into the

spirit of experimentation. There's just that constant ebb and flow of, 'How far can we take this?' Ultimately, if it doesn't feel real to me emotionally, then it's gone too far. Since I started my professional career as an editor, I can think as an editor on set. Instead of doing take after take to find a cohesiveness of a performance, I feel [I know] when I get the pieces I need.

"For me and for the actresses, it's really about finding the moments and getting to those moments and collecting those moments, so when we get into the editing room, we have some really interesting, risk-taking stuff that works within the context of an emotional reality. Unfortunately, I think that a lot of modern horror films are really about the pomp and circumstance, instead of what's really going on behind the mask, or behind the prosthetics."

From his work on G VS. E and the Sci Fi Channel's THE INVISIBLE MAN, Butler is used to the dilemmas that come about when orchestrating the end of the world (or its salvation from destruction). Landing the role of supervising editor on GOOD VS. EVIL upon graduation from USC Film School, Butler soon found himself directing episodes of the series. Though G VS. E never quite found an audience large enough to sustain it in the ratings game, Butler gained enough experience and contacts to find work in both television and movies, including the telesequel PRANCER RETURNS, and the "gross-out" comedy BEER MONEY. In the past year, Butler helped form the production house, Kinetic Pictures, which produced ESPN's first feature, SEASON ON THE BRINK: THE BOBBY KNIGHT STORY.

You can't get much more diverse. "It's interesting," Butler said, "because I felt that after doing GOOD VS. EVIL I would end up doing a film like this film. So in a way, even though I've been doing the grand tour of film genres, I feel that I've returned home now.

"This is a genre where I feel really confident as a filmmaker, to the point where I feel like I can get in there a lot more aggressively with film style and still advance the story, rather than getting in the way of it. I think that style should fit the material. Here I really feel that the more I do with my camera and the way I shoot the film, the more I can enhance the vision. It's fun for me to borrow from all those techniques that I was starting to experiment with about four years ago."

There's another aspect of SAINT SINNER that attracted Butler to the project: Barker's recurring theme of human-defined religion. While fascinated by Christianity and all its trappings, Barker's work isn't always kind to the faith's most devout members. Since SAINT SINNER is



ON EMISSION FROM GOD: As befits a Clive Barker project, SAINT SINNER boasts both edgy sexuality (above) and horrific demises (below).

a mainstream television project, audiences shouldn't expect a high level of blasphemy. Still, there is an edge to the script that spoke to the young director. "I am a recovering Catholic," Butler said. "I had a crazy Catholic upbringing, and at one point my mother actually wanted me to be a Catholic priest, so I became immersed in a kind of right-wing Catholicism that thankfully I escaped after my parents divorced. Now I am able to call upon a lot of those elements while doing this film.

"When I first met with Clive, I put that right on the table. I feel that there is something really horrific about certain elements of Catholicism; the iconography in the Catholic religion specifically. I think the images themselves are often horrific, and the history of Catholicism.... The Spanish Inquisition, anybody? There's a history of horrific behavior associated with the religion. Need we forget the Crusades, also the sense that anything can be done in God's or Jesus' name? It's certainly something that extends beyond Catholicism, I think, to religion in general—you can certainly see that in what's going on in world events.

"It's certainly one of the topical elements in the script, in that you can hide behind religion and justify pretty much any action. I think that's really what the film is about. We all have a saint inside of us and we all have a sinner. Both parts can be justified and supported and/or hidden as needed. Do we erase what's good or what's evil in us? And can we be a saint if we have the capacity to sin? I think those are profound questions for a recovering Catholic, and it's rare that you get the opportunity to explore this on film. It's been a cathartic experience for me." CFQ

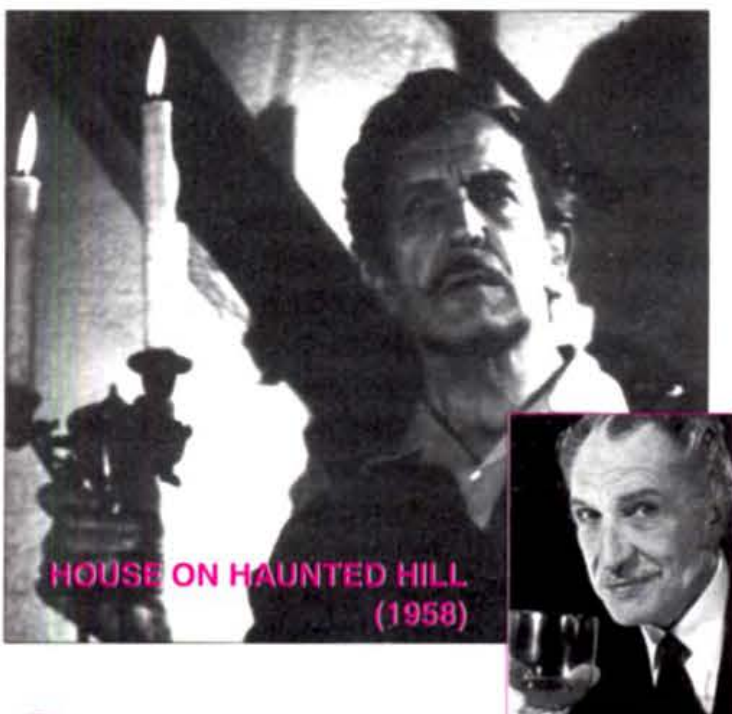


Let's face it people...men can't catch a break. Women like to preach about so-called "equality," but when it comes to the horror genre, it's always Jamie Lee Curtis—this or Neve Campbell—that. It seems the criteria for prestigious Scream Queen status consists of nothing more than a killer set of (ahem) pipes, and the ability to go a round or two with a sadistic slasher. Don't want to get paranoid on y'all, but it's obvious there's a whole lot of backstabbing going on, and this time Jason ain't responsible. It's time the folks with the XY chromosomes get their due.

Think of the advantages if writers started scripting men as the remaining survivor: No contractual haggling over body doubles just because you want your star to take off his shirt; no extra expenditures for fresh-fruit and yogurt at the crafts table; and none of this ambivalent, turn-your-back-on-the-supposedly-dead-homicidal-maniac crap. When a guy puts down a chainsaw-lugging psychopath, the sucka stays down.

It's only fair. Who does all the dirty work, anyway? You hardly ever see a mask-sporting female chasing down the fleeing victim. Do the names Jason, Freddy, Norman Bates, or Michael Myers mean nothing? Come on—like life, it's the men doing all the lifting, carrying, and wanton, wholesale slaughter.

Don't get us wrong. Actresses like Ms. Curtis deserve more than a bow of respect for repeatedly taking on all those blade-wielding lunatics, but there's no reason why even this certified Scream Queen need reign alone when there are so many male counterparts to share the throne. Men deserve some recognition (and bragging rights). So move over, all you Jennifer Love Hewitt wannabes. Here are the guys who'll show you how it's really done.



**1. VINCENT PRICE**  
**Hollywood's Prince of Darkness**  
Highlights: *HOUSE OF USHER, HOUSE OF WAX, THE FLY.*

How do you determine who deserves to sit on top of this haunted hill as Master of the Macabre? Body of work? Amount of blood spilled? Number of times you almost wet your pants during his movies? Vincent Price easily encompassed all criteria. To fans, he's the spooksmeister with the cryptic voice and diabolical laughter, the one who could commit unspeakable actions and grin in the exultation of a job well-done. Price's frightening presence spanned decades, branching even into the most cutting edge of mediums (who else could preside so regally over the dubious pleasures of Polaroid 3D? Who else might Michael Jackson cast as the voice of doom for his THRILLER rock video?). It's possible that someone might one day usurp his throne, but for the foreseeable future, Mr. Price is the undisputed King of Horror. Now we dare you: just try and take that title away. Just try.



**2. LON CHANEY, SR.**  
**Man Of A Thousand Faces**  
Highlights: *PHANTOM OF THE OPERA, HUNCHBACK OF NOTRE DAME, LONDON AFTER MIDNIGHT.*

If anything, Lon Chaney was the first movie star to be primarily associated with horror. Although he appeared in many silent movies, his transformations into *THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA* and *THE HUNCHBACK OF NOTRE DAME*'s Quasimodo were the building blocks upon which a genre was built, and remain the indelible definition of both characters. He could have carried the legacy into the talkies—he was originally tapped to play Dracula before a cancerous growth in his throat prohibited him from completing the terrific stunt—but there can be no argument that Chaney paved the way for Lugosi and Karloff. Even in death, he lives forever as a cinematic icon.

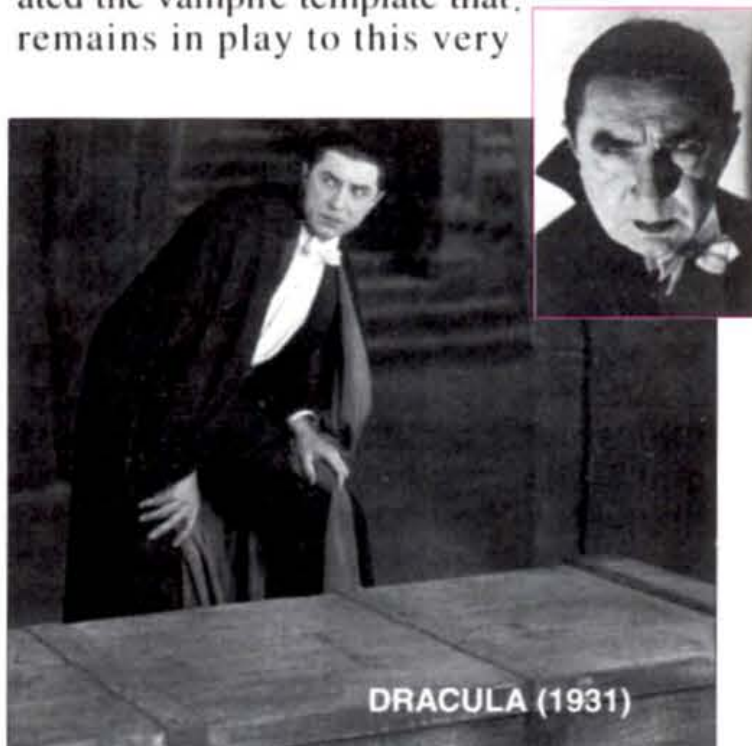
**3. BORIS KARLOFF**  
**Mr. Monster Mash**  
Highlights: *FRANKENSTEIN, THE MUMMY, THE BLACK CAT, TARGETS.*  
Up until 1931, Boris Karloff's career



**FRANKENSTEIN (1931)**  
was pretty lifeless. Then he debuted as the Monster in *FRANKENSTEIN*. The role propelled him to the A-list, at least during Universal's "golden age" of horror, where he continued to stun with a string of ghastly roles. Despite all the years that have passed, and all the stage blood that has flowed, remember that there was a time when chills could be generated simply with the flashing of a single name on the screen: KARLOFF.

**4. BELA LUGOSI**  
**Reign of the Vampire**  
Highlights: *DRACULA, THE BLACK CAT, WHITE ZOMBIE.*

With the courtly and blood-curdling intonation, "I am Dracula," Bela Lugosi created the vampire template that remains in play to this very



day. It was more than the chilling accent, the slick, black hair, or the aristocratic getup that cemented his portrayal so firmly in the world's memory—Lugosi really seemed to embody the Transylvania bloodsucker. The role ushered in a new wave of horror, and certainly made its impression on its creator, for good and ill: When he died in 1956, he was buried with the Dracula cape that helped make him famous.

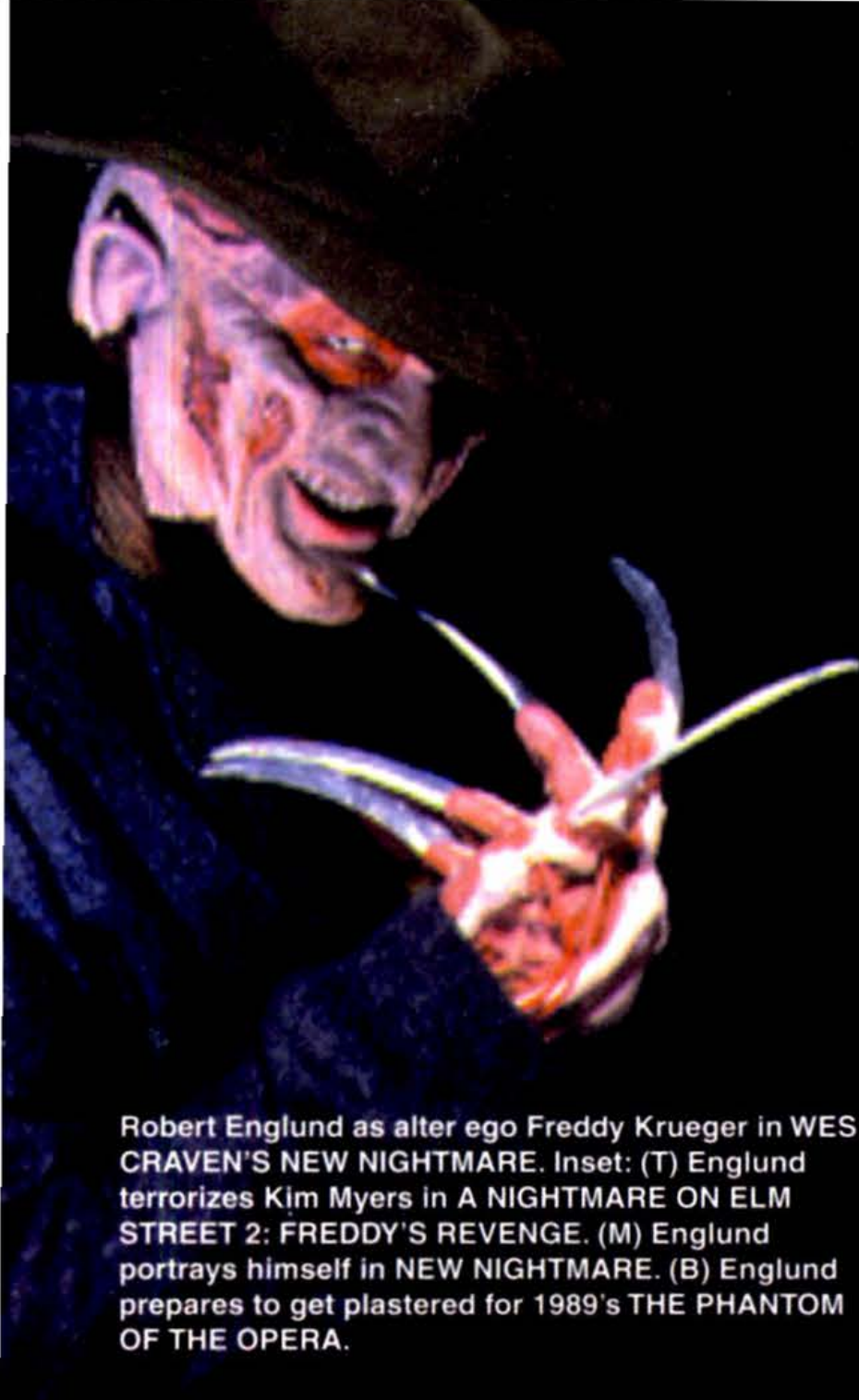
**5. ROBERT ENGLUND**  
**New Line's Dream Boy**  
Highlights: *A NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET 1-7, URBAN LEGEND, WISHMASTER.*  
Robert Englund can jump ship to other horror movies, but to his fans, he'll always



You've Met The  
**SCREAM QUEENS...**  
Now It's Time To Meet  
Their **KINGS...**

**THE  
REIGNING  
MASTERS OF**

**THE MACABRE**



Robert Englund as alter ego Freddy Krueger in WES CRAVEN'S NEW NIGHTMARE. Inset: (T) Englund terrorizes Kim Myers in A NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET 2: FREDDY'S REVENGE. (M) Englund portrays himself in NEW NIGHTMARE. (B) Englund prepares to get plastered for 1989's THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA.

be dream demon Freddy Krueger. NIGHTMARE 2's director, Jack Sholder, recently noted that without Englund, Krueger is all talk and no terror. Unfortunately, while New Line may be the house that Freddy built, any ELM STREET projects are currently in development Hell (though it's rumored FREDDY VS. JASON may begin shooting in September).



## LON CHANEY JR.

**6. Daddy's Little Monster**  
Highlights: THE WOLF MAN, THE MUMMY'S TOUCH, GHOST OF FRANKENSTEIN.

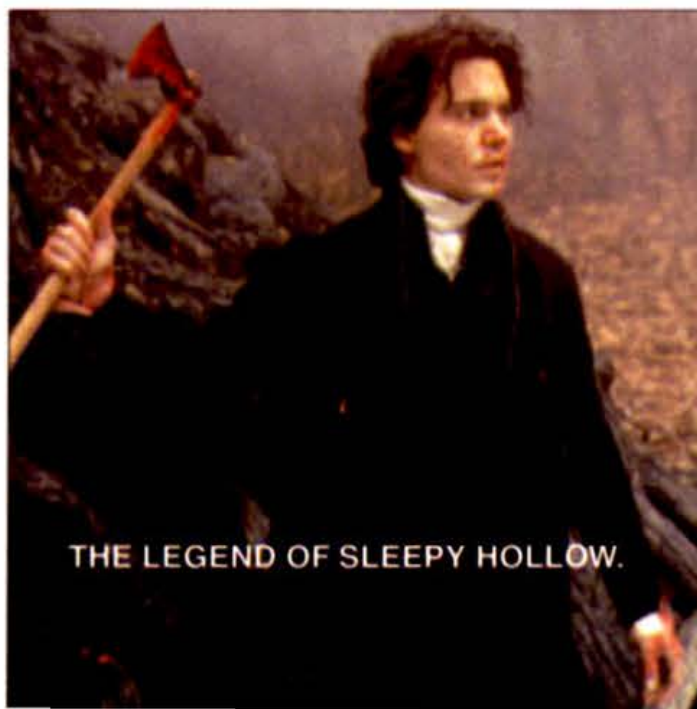
Lon Chaney Jr. did more than follow in dear old Dad's footsteps; he took the horror genre and ran with it. Responsible for bringing such creatures as THE WOLF

MAN to the screen, Chaney Jr. relied on heavy makeup, continuing the proud tradition begun by his father.

## 7. JOHNNY DEPP

**Arthouse Gothic Hero**  
Highlights: A NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET, SLEEPY HOLLOW, FROM HELL.

Thanks to Freddy Krueger, Johnny Depp's inauguration into movies ended up with the guy applying the Method to his role as a bloody stain on the ceiling. That didn't deter him, though. Known for his indie work, Depp routinely re-engages with the supernatural, adding a classic realism to genre heroes. Who else could pay homage to horror's most slipshod auteur in ED WOOD, then turn right around and match wits with Jack the Ripper in FROM HELL?



THE LEGEND OF SLEEPY HOLLOW.

## 8. CHRISTOPHER LEE

**This Man's A Vamp**  
Highlights: DRACULA, THE WICKER MAN, GORGON, GREMLINS 2, SLEEPY HOLLOW.

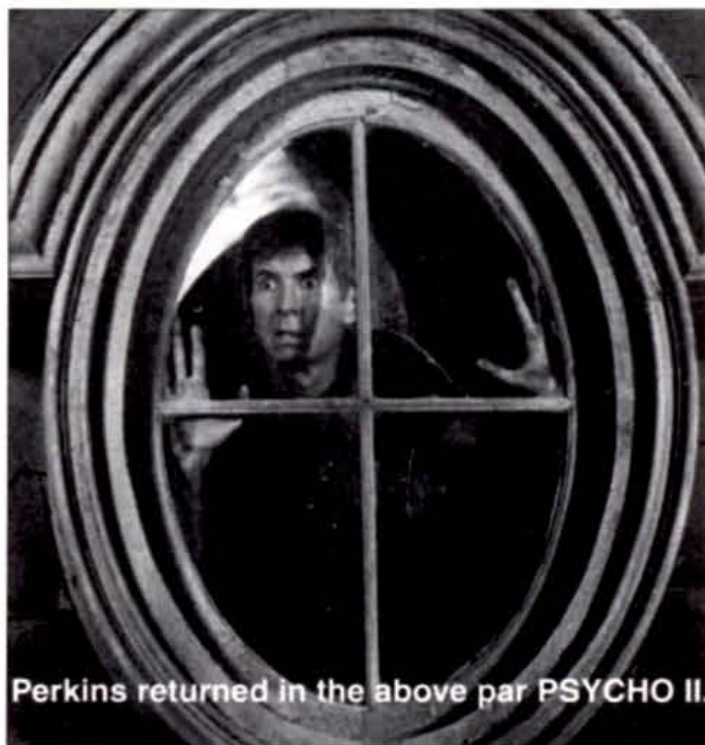
Dracula may be Hollywood's most recycled character, but the truth is that many of these cookie-cutter clones suck, and not in the good, draining-the-swooning-ingenue way. Christopher Lee, however, hewed to a higher standard, with his smooth-operator spin on Transylvania's favorite son always standing out amongst the undead pack. Suddenly, Dracula had sex appeal, an incontrovertible charisma that he used to seduce his prey before turning them into fine dining. Hammer was never known for its lavish budgets, but you could never



tell from the investment Lee placed in his portrayals. At last, the Lord of the Vampires had more depth than some anonymous, undead zombie.

## 9. ANTHONY PERKINS

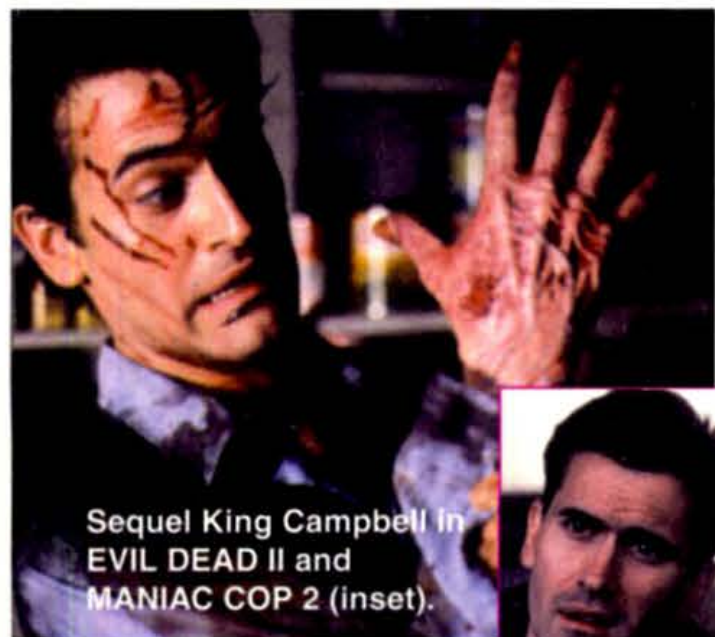
**Mamma's Boy**  
Highlights: PSYCHO I-IV.



Perkins returned in the above par PSYCHO II.

Most actors would kill for a role which delivered an Oscar. Not Anthony Perkins,

whose claim to fame never netted a gold statue, but became one of the most memorable monsters of contemporary film. When Norman Bates went stab-happy during *PSYCHO*'s notorious shower scene, Perkins and his character gained immortality. Decades later, the performance still has people locking the bathroom doors and peeking around the shower curtains. Now that's power.



Sequel King Campbell in *EVIL DEAD II* and *MANIAC COP 2* (inset).

## 10. BRUCE CAMPBELL

**Ashelites Assemble!**

*Highlights:* *THE EVIL DEAD*, *EVIL DEAD II: DEAD BY DAWN*, *ARMY OF DARKNESS: EVIL DEAD III*, *MANIAC COP 1 and 2*, *SUNDOWN*, *WAXWORK II*, *MINDWARP*.

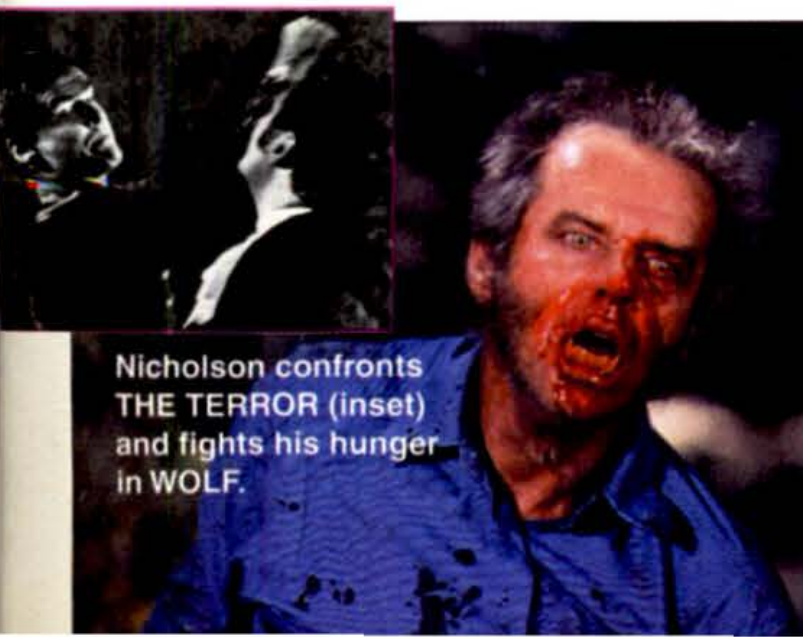
Poor Bruce. As "Ash" in the *EVIL DEAD* trilogy, he's battled ancient demon spirits, been marinated in blood, and felled more Fake Shemps than Moe Howard managed in his entire career. The schmuck must be a sucker for punishment, because he keeps returning to the same haunted grounds. Campbell's over-the-top antics and glib one-liners put a camp veneer on the gory goings-on—as a result, he's become B-Movies' king of cult. Now if only His Royal Highness would make *EVIL DEAD IV* before we are forced to resort to violence.

## 11. JACK NICHOLSON

**Mr. Intensity**

*Highlights:* *THE RAVEN*, *THE SHINING*, *THE TERROR*, *WITCHES OF EASTWICK*.

Absolutely no one taps into their inner psycho like Jack. There's no denying his



Nicholson confronts *THE TERROR* (inset) and fights his hunger in *WOLF*.

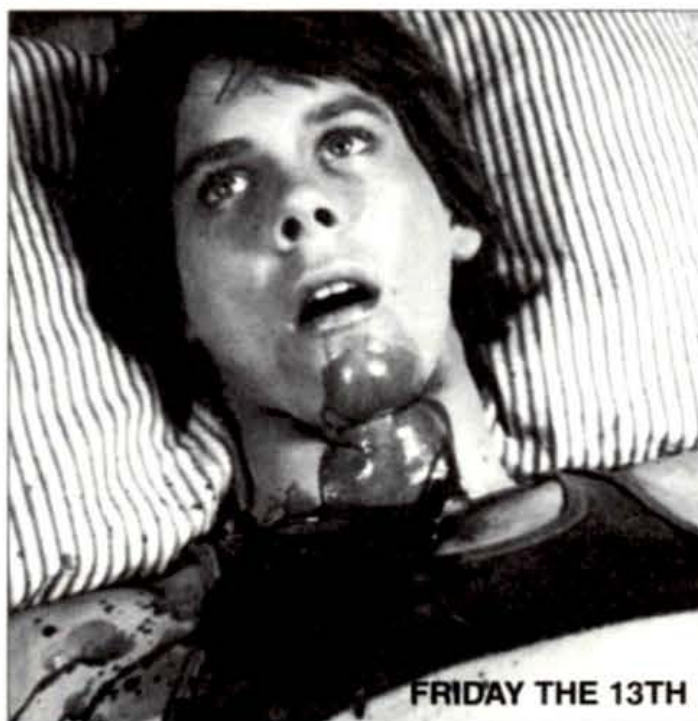
talent for drama, but when he goes over the edge, moviegoers jump in after him. His signature "Heeeeere's Johnny!" has enshrined itself in pop culture history, and his portrayal of the Joker in *BATMAN*—the monster as homicidal comedian—demonstrated that one could boldly chew the scenery without forcing the audience to resort to Tums. Now if studios would only snatch the old jokester for more devilish roles, we'd be in heaven.

## 12. KEVIN BACON

**Good Looks Can Deceive**

*Highlights:* *FRIDAY THE 13TH*, *TREMORS*, *STIR OF ECHOES*, *HOLLOW MAN*, *FLATLINERS*.

Get past his contribution to the world of post-modern party games. Bacon has lent a verisimilitude to his portrayals that have often meant the difference between life and death for a number of dodgy projects. After all, who else could sufficiently ground the idea of a desert town being devoured by—you gotta be kidding—giant worms? From



FRIDAY THE 13TH

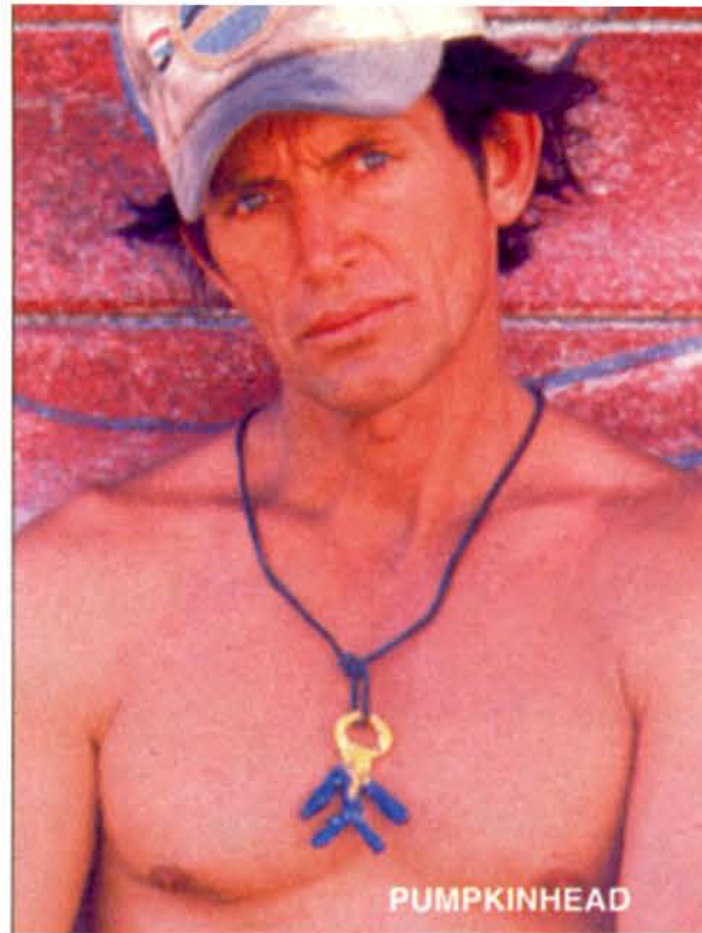
slasher alumni to afterlife detective to transparent sociopath, Bacon's repertoire beats out many a "distinguished" thespian's resume, and does it six degrees to Sunday.

## 13. KANE HODDER

**King of Pain**

*Highlights:* *FRIDAY THE 13TH PARTS VII—X*, *HOUSE IV*, *CHILDREN OF THE CORN V*, *PUMPKINHEAD II*.

Did Kane Hodder actually come up with the phrase, "I see dead people?" As Jason, Camp Crystal Lake's resident boogeyman, never has one actor built his career so firmly on aggregate body count (okay, just for simplicity's sake, we're leaving Val Kilmer out of this). Filling Jason's hockey mask since the seventh installment, Hodder has raised the art of slayage to a savage level. In *JASON X*, he took his machete into space—despite the groans of critics, it's doubtful that even being held in synchronous orbit will stop the man. If that FRED-



PUMPKINHEAD

DY VS. JASON match-up ever gets off the ground, it can only mean one thing: more fodder for Hodder.

## 14. LANCE HENRIKSEN

**Disturbing Behavior**

*Highlights:* *ALIENS*, *ALIEN 3*, *PUMPKINHEAD*, *NEAR DARK*, *SCREAM 3*.

If you've rented a horror flick in the last two decades, chances are you've caught Henriksen doing his thing. The *ALIENS* actor easily slips between high-profile projects, middle-ground gems, and low-budget cheese. With upcoming appearances in several, additional films, he may slowly creep up this list. We may bump him up anyway, just out of fear that he might otherwise track us down and talk, very, very low to us.



FRIDAY THE 13TH—PART VII: THE NEW BLOOD

# BRUCE CAMPBELL

## This Ruggedly Handsome Actor is the Vincent Price of the Gen X-ers.

By Bryan L. Cairns

Some people might say 43-year-old actor Bruce Campbell took the high road into Hollywood. Initially side-stepping cattle-call Hell, Campbell, along with childhood chums Rob Tapert and Sam Raimi (*THE GIFT*, *SPIDER-MAN*), produced the independent horror film, *THE EVIL DEAD*. As demon-slayer "Ash," Campbell garnered considerable attention, and two subsequent sequels firmly established him as king of the B-movies. Since then, this cinematic camp artist has appeared in *MANIAC COP 1* and 2,

*CONGO*, *FARGO*, *ESCAPE FROM L.A.*, *ELLEN*, *XENA: WARRIOR PRINCESS*, *HERCULES: THE LEGENDARY JOURNEYS*, and headlined the television series *THE ADVENTURES OF BRISCOE COUNTY, JR.* and *JACK OF ALL TRADES*. Recently

cropping up in *SPIDER-MAN* and the season finale of *CHARMED*, the multi-talented Campbell wasn't reluctant to revisit his *EVIL DEAD* days and speculate why these macabre masterpieces have

become cult classics.

"I think it's due to the overall, unbridled lunacy associated with the flicks and my character," said the actor. "The flicks may be guilty pleasures, but each one has a different flavor. The character and the films are very in-your-face and irreverent, and I think that strikes a chord with the college crowd."

ly filmed a 30-minute splatter-fest short entitled *WITHIN THE WOODS* to showcase their talents. Using it as a promotional tool, it helped them raise the funds for their feature-length follow-up, 1982's *EVIL DEAD*. Despite

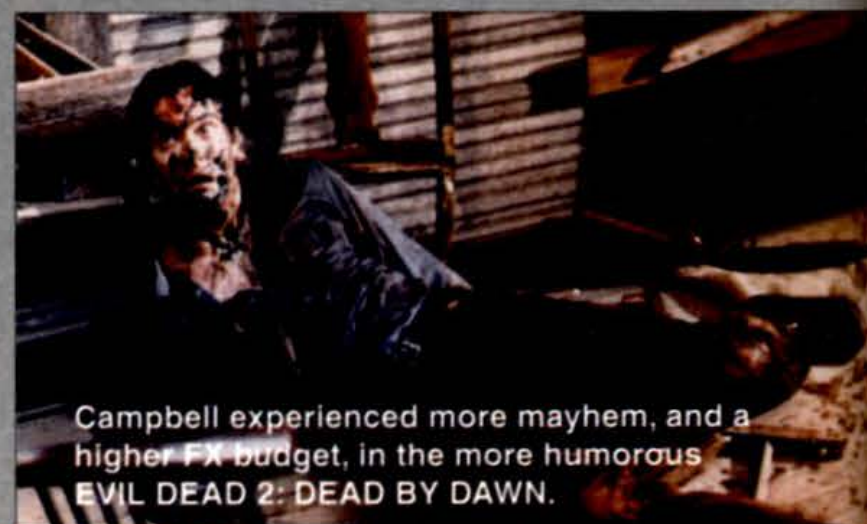
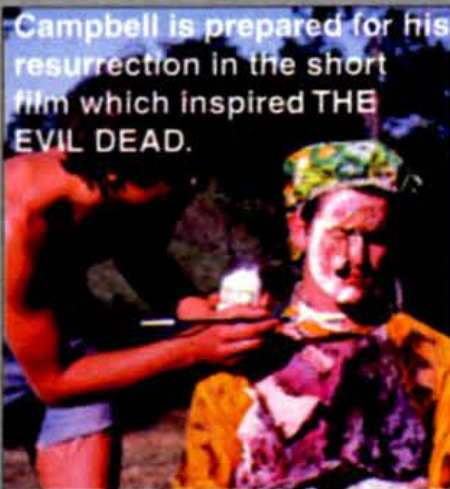


Bruce Campbell in *THE EVIL DEAD*.

Born and raised in Detroit, Michigan, Campbell and company original-

"Detroit is a small town and we didn't want to burn our investors, some of whom were friends and family. I honestly don't think you need to be a fan of a particular genre to be able to figure it out. We got better at it as the films progressed."

Campbell is prepared for his resurrection in the short film which inspired *THE EVIL DEAD*.



Campbell experienced more mayhem, and a higher FX budget, in the more humorous *EVIL DEAD 2: DEAD BY DAWN*.



Of the three *EVIL DEAD* films, Campbell's turn in the original was the goriest and scariest.

a micro-budget of \$350,000, an unprofessional crew, and a grumbling, overworked cast, the imaginative and gory outcome has been referred to as the godfather of low budget horrors. Heck, even Stephen King praised it as, "The most ferociously original horror film of the year." Ironically, at the time, Campbell was by no means a fan of the genre. "We made a horror flick simply because it was one of the great staples in the industry, and we thought we could make our money back," he admitted.

The other integral element, which evolved exponentially over the course of the series, was its outrageous humor. Campbell would soon become a human punching bag for his zombie-transformed pals, and in one of the most memorable scenes, from *EVIL DEAD 2*, chopped off his own possessed hand. Of course, with dancing corpses, miniature Ashs, nose-picking skeletons, and slapstick antics there was no shortage of laughter. While Campbell chalks his sense of humor

up to simply having a good time, he doesn't feel the need to inject hilarity into all his projects. Serious roles on *HOMICIDE* or *THE X-FILES* have required a more conventional approach to his performances, but if he can include some levity without forcing it, it's a done deal.

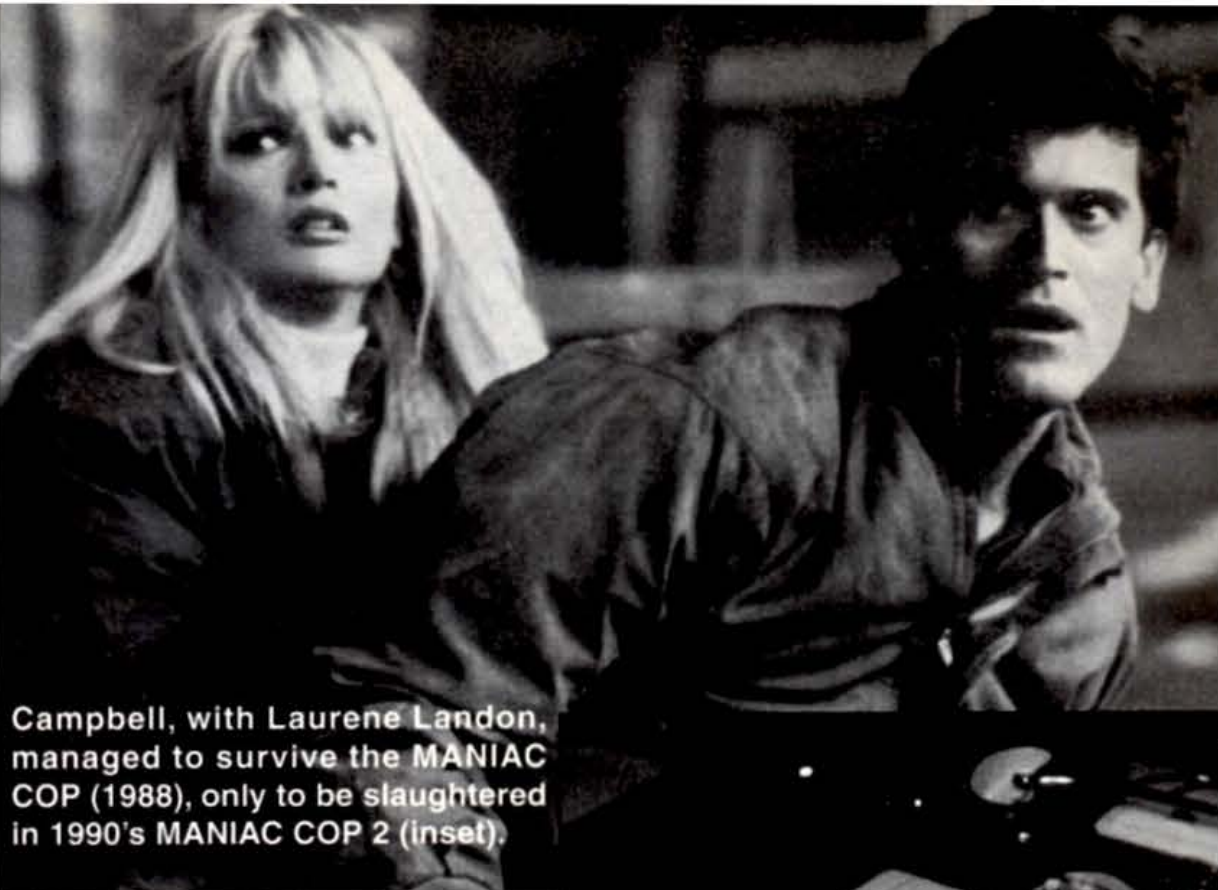
As for the *EVIL DEAD* trilogy, he attributes the comedic touches, as well as creative input, to the general air of give-and-take on the set. "Any time the character speaks, there will always be my version of reading that line of dialogue. Everything is interpretation. Rob and I also gave Sam various notes throughout the process with regard to budget, story, dialogue, or whatever. However, the creative brunt was held by Sam, Scott Spiegel (on *ED II*), and Ivan

basic plan of attack. I also think that Sam started to write for me as the series went on."

Working with someone who can draw on your strengths is definitely a bonus, but what about those cardinal rules of friendship: Never live together; never date each other's exs; and *never* work with one another? Campbell insisted that having Raimi helm the ship was more pleasure than pain. "The relationship is a lot of fun," he said. "Sam is a very bossy director, but he and I share a lot of mutual respect, so we get along well. Though we've worked on some very difficult projects, we've had a lot of fun along the way. At the end of the day, we both want what's best for a given film."

Good attitude, but does that make it easier to voice any concerns? "Each of us has an opinion, but I respect Sam's role as the director. Someone has to be boss, the captain, and Sam fills those shoes well. We haven't really come head-to-head on any subject yet."

While Jamie Lee Curtis' first parts in the *HALLOWEEN* movies catapulted her further into scream-queen territory, Campbell was never solely lumped as a gore guru, which is fine by him. Although he regards the *EVIL DEAD* flicks as a fun time in the fright zone, that was a lifetime ago. More than a decade later, his eclectic resume boasts writing and di-



Campbell, with Laurene Landon, managed to survive the *MANIAC COP* (1988), only to be slaughtered in 1990's *MANIAC COP 2* (inset).

recting credits, in addition to a busy acting schedule. On the horizon, Campbell can be found working the boards in *BUBBA HO-TEP* and *SERVICING SARA*.

And, of course, there's *If Chins Could Kill*, a witty tome chronicling Campbell's foray into Tinsel Town, complete with behind-the-scenes tidbits and informed commentaries. The project, which was a few years in the making, received rave reviews from both critics and readers. "The timing all fell into place, and I was able to carve out three months to devote exclusively to the book," said Campbell. "Any individual would have a unique perspective on any subject, but mine comes from the Hollywood trenches, where the working stiffs are. I think that point-of-view hasn't adequately been represented in the literary world."

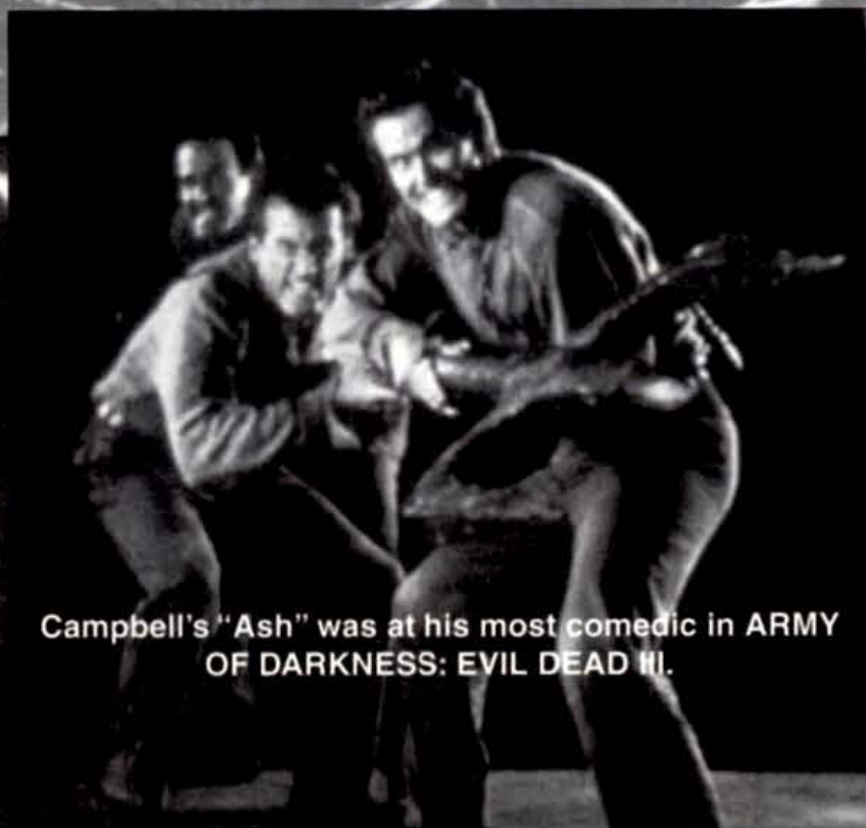
There's no doubt this guy revels in the material-at-hand, choosing freely to ham it up in

goofy, liberating roles. To top it off, Campbell always hits a home-run with his real-life fans. He's interview-friendly, approachable in person, thrilled to sign autographs, resolute in his upkeep of the [www.bruce-campbell.com](http://www.bruce-campbell.com) website, and, oh yeah, he reads his email. So how does he respond when internetaphiliacs inquire about *EVIL DEAD 4*? And what kind of story and character development would have him back in Ash's shoes? "When/if there is ever talk of another one, we'll get into it then," replied a diplomatic Campbell. "It's safe to say that all the creative elements would have to be just right before any of us did anything." Hardcore deadites have a bit of wait ahead of them.

CFQ



Raimi (*ARMY OF DARKNESS*). I'd input stuff on the set, and Sam did a great deal of embellishing on the set as well, but you have to have a



Campbell's "Ash" was at his most comedic in *ARMY OF DARKNESS: EVIL DEAD III*.

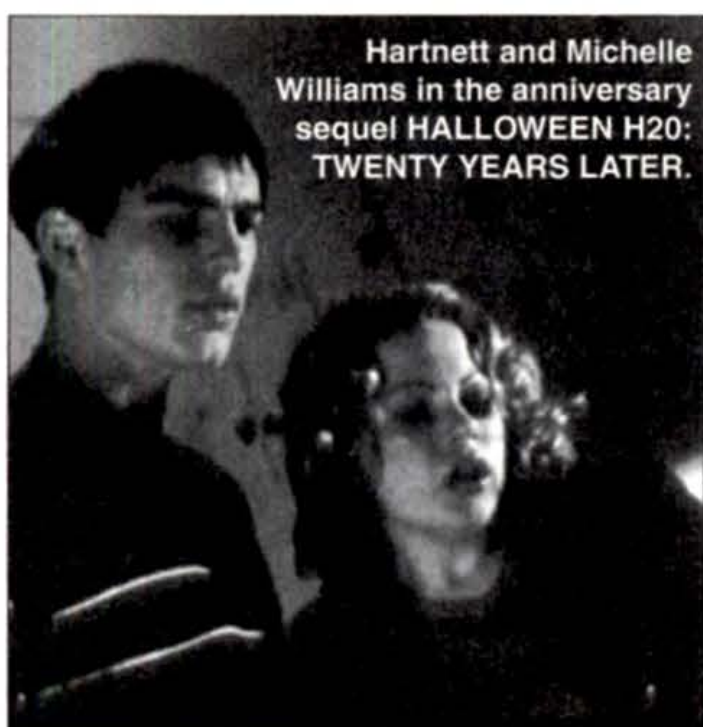


## 15. THE MEN OF THE WB

### Killer Looks

Highlights: *SCREAM 3*, *FINAL DESTINATION*, *VALENTINE*, *URBAN LEGENDS*, *THE FORSAKEN*, *PINATA*, *IDLE HANDS*, *SLEEPWALKERS*.

The WB is responsible for cranking out the next generation of horror hotties. While females drool away, their boyfriends eagerly anticipate painful demises for this roster of good-looking guys. Scott Foley, Kerr Smith, David Boreanaz, Joshua Jackson, Nicholas Brendon, Brian Krause, and Brendan Fehr have all had their brushes with the Grim Reaper—in some cases, they were even responsible for the massacres. These guys aren't angels, after all. Well, okay, maybe one is.



Hartnett and Michelle Williams in the anniversary sequel *HALLOWEEN H20: TWENTY YEARS LATER*.

## 16. JOSH HARTNETT

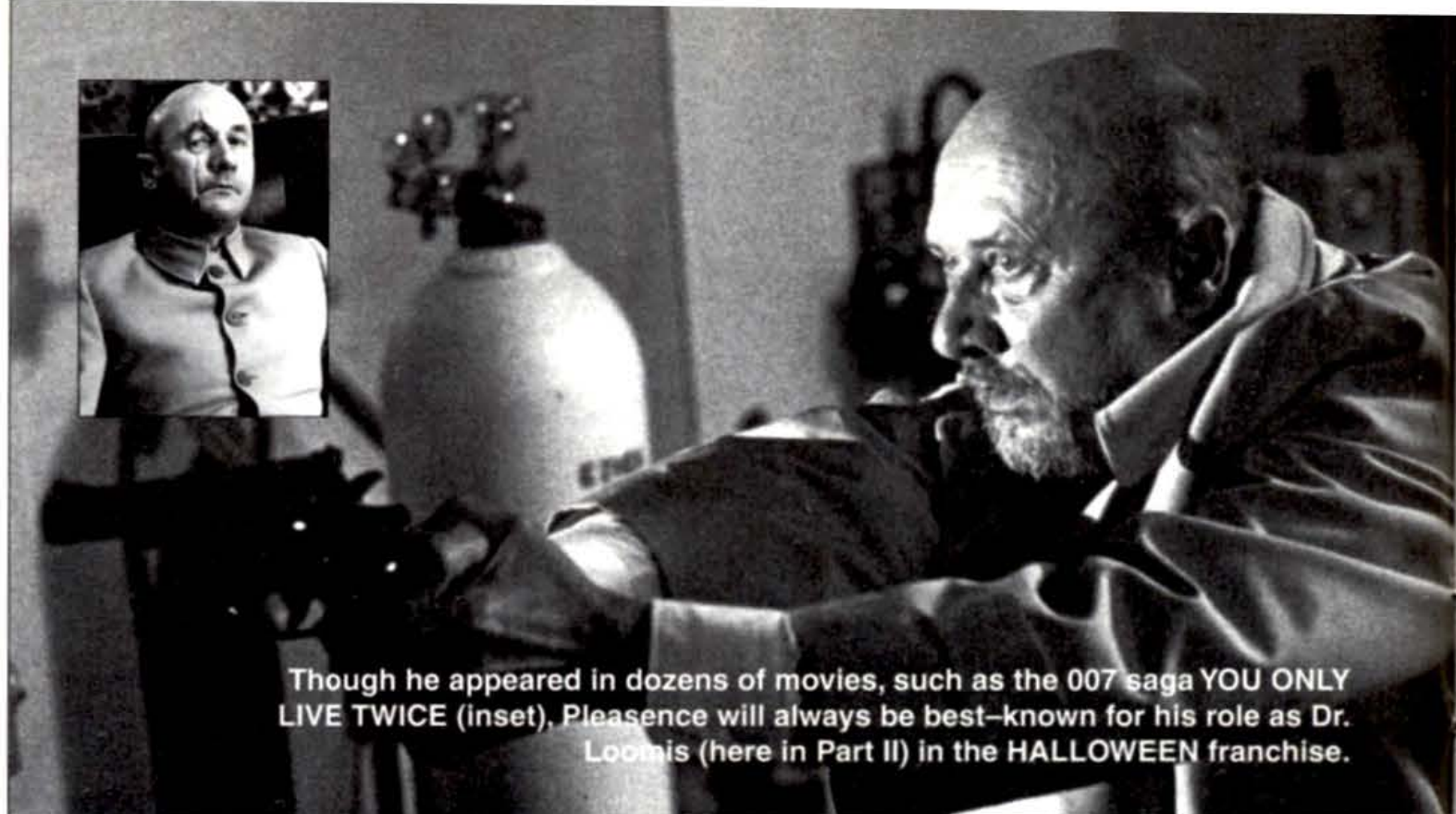
### The New Scream King?

Highlights: *HALLOWEEN: H20*, *THE FACULTY*.

For a while, Josh Hartnett was touted as horror's new It Boy. He survived *HALLOWEEN: H20*, followed it up with *THE FACULTY*, and was courted for the lead in *QUEEN OF THE DAMNED*. However, he decided to leave Terrortown to pursue such projects as *PEARL HARBOR*. But don't count the charismatic Hartnett out quite yet. As Jamie Lee Curtis recently proved, it's never too late to return to the fold.



Arquette gets terrorized with on-and-off screen mate Courtney Cox in the \$90 million grossing *SCREAM 3*.



Though he appeared in dozens of movies, such as the 007 saga *YOU ONLY LIVE TWICE* (inset), Pleasence will always be best-known for his role as Dr. Loomis (here in Part II) in the *HALLOWEEN* franchise.

## 17. DAVID ARQUETTE

### No Laughing Matter

Highlights: *SCREAM 1-3*, *BUFFY, THE VAMPIRE SLAYER*, *RAVENOUS*.

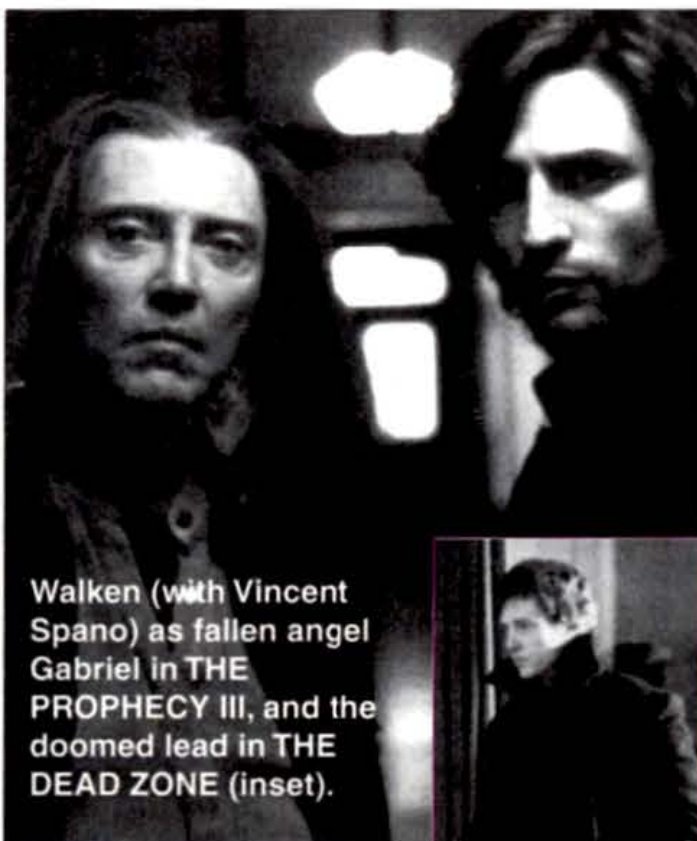
The jury is out on David Arquette. The *SCREAM* trilogy played off his chucklehead strengths, but the darker *RAVENOUS* failed miserably. Has this year's *EIGHT LEGGED FREAKS* determined that Arquette is horror's preeminent goofball, or should he start lobbying for that inevitable berth in *SCREAM 4*?

## 18. DONALD PLEASANCE

### Evilbuster

Highlights: *HALLOWEEN I, II, IV-VI*, *PRINCE OF DARKNESS*, *ALONE IN THE DARK*, *TERROR IN THE AISLES*.

The man has faced off against Michael



Walken (with Vincent Spano) as fallen angel Gabriel in *THE PROPHECY III*, and the doomed lead in *THE DEAD ZONE* (inset).



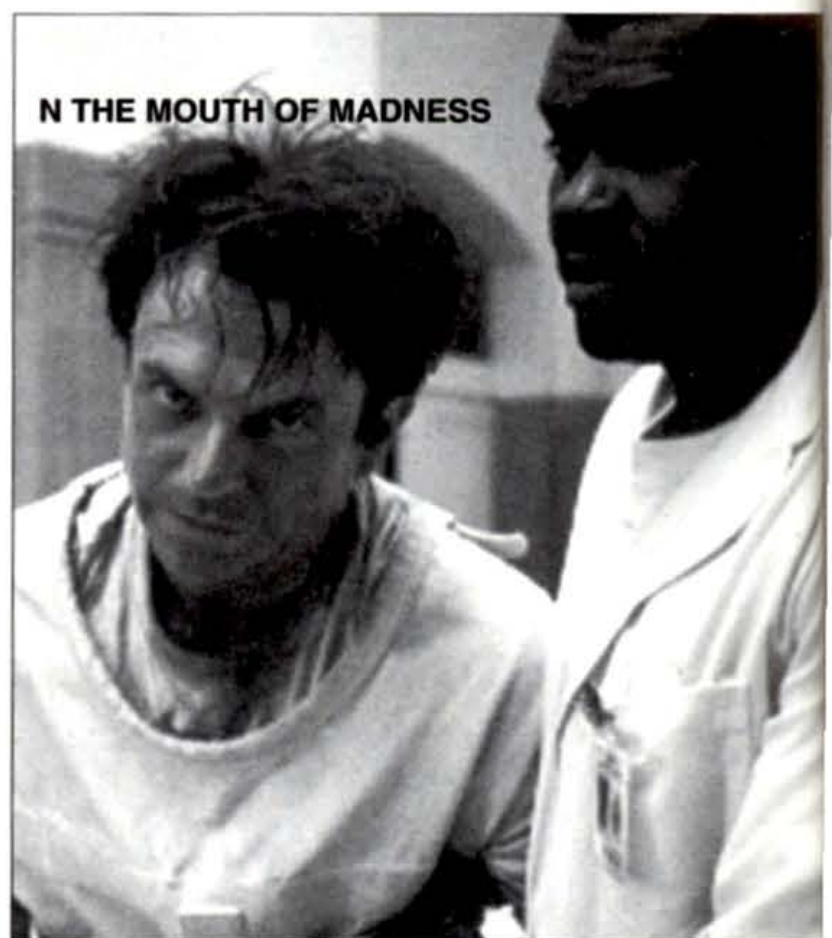
Myers five times and lived to tell the tale. That's no small feat. And just to prove it wasn't a fluke, he's kicked some evil butt in other movies, too. (We'll just ignore *WARRIOR OF THE LOST WORLD*, mmmkay?)

## 19. CHRISTOPHER WALKEN

### Fallen Angel

Highlights: *THE DEAD ZONE*, *SLEEPY HOLLOW*, *THE PROPHECY 1-3*.

Forget the suicidal soldier or the tired tough-guy routine. Headless or not, Walken—with his patented morbid tone, deadly stare, and foreboding presence—is bona-fide Hellraiser material. Here's a guy you wouldn't want to bump into during the day, let alone in a dark alley.



IN THE MOUTH OF MADNESS

## 20. SAM NEILL

### Devil-Made Man

Highlights: *EVENT HORIZON*, *SNOW WHITE: A TALE OF TERROR*, *DEAD CALM*, *OMEN III: THE FINAL CONFLICT*, *IN THE MOUTH OF MADNESS*, *JURASSIC PARK*, *JURASSIC PARK III*.

Sam Neill's true strength lies in the dark side. He's stared down the mouth of madness, and embodied evil incarnate twice. With that devious smile, we're praying he's primed for a third flirtation with ol' Scratch.



# KANE HODDER

*Though Six Killed Before Him, He's the Only Actor Recognized Without the Mask*

By Bryan Cairns

**K**ane Hodder has committed enough gruesome and grotesque murders to fill a small-sized morgue. With a preference for young, unsuspecting campers, usually of the sex-crazed variety, he's sliced, stabbed, slit, and snapped his way into the hearts of movie-going audiences everywhere. And he's loved every massacring minute of it. Who wouldn't?

As boogeyman Jason Voorhees of *FRIDAY THE 13TH* movie fame, he's played the hockey mask-wearing fiend in parts VII thru X. With New Line Cinema's *JASON X* under his belt, Hodder, as everyone's favorite killing machine, admits that when it comes to scaring people, it's simply become a guilty pleasure. "I know for a fact no one who has ever played the role before me enjoyed it as much as I do," said the actor. "That may say something about my personality. I try and put a lot more into it. A lot of guys looked at him as a psycho zombie and never put any character into him."

"It's really difficult to do when you can't use your face or voice. I try to do it with a breathing technique and the way I stand. I've also been told I look the most natural. So natural, in fact, that whenever I'm at an appearance, fans ask me to do the Jason walk. Unfortunately, that's kind of how I walk. I exaggerate

it a little but it's not that different. I'd like to say it's my incredible acting, but that's how I move."

With *JASON X* released in 2002, Hodder once again got into the groove. "It is the best one so far. The violence is back in a big way. Hardly anything was cut out of the version of the film I saw. Jason is at his most deadly."

Hodder explained that a lot of directors either come in with a "this-is-just-another-slasher-flick" attitude or concentrate more on the movie while ignoring the Jason character. On the other hand, *JASON X* director Jim Isaac had nothing but respect for the undead butcherer. He would listen to suggestions, especially about the do's and don'ts of Jason. And who better to consult than the man behind the hockey mask? "Isaac would listen to my input, not necessarily always taking my advice," said Hodder. "On the most part, he'd make the right decision."

One of the things the two definitely saw eye-to-eye on was Hodder's favorite kill. In *FRIDAY THE 13TH PART VII: THE NEW BLOOD* (1988), female camper Judy stupidly tries to escape Jason's wrath by zipping herself up in a sleeping bag. Jason proceeds to drag the squirming female out of the tent, still inside the bag, and bash her against a tree—*snap*—like a twig. "If you think about that kill, there was no blood, so you can't consider it that gory," reasoned Hodder, who prefers unusual deaths over the bloody kind. "But it was so creative and violent."

Hodder pointed out that *JASON X*'s makeup and costume were two other personal bonuses. Designed by Academy Award winner Stephen Dupuis (*THE FLY*), the rig took less than an hour to get Jason geared up, with the outfit at the beginning of the movie the most comfortable. No direct prosthetics were required, since the mask is never removed. The only extra was a droopy eye attached to the actual mask, which slid perfectly into his eye socket when put on.

However, once Jason undergoes an uber-transformation, giving him a cyber-like appearance, Hodder switched costumes. Simulated metallic pieces and red contacts were added. The drawback was uber-Jason's outerwear was rather heavy, and eventually the heat built up, restricting his range of movement.

But no one ever said playing an undead powerhouse would be easy. And since this isn't exactly one of those roles you can prepare for ("I've rarely killed in real life," joked the actor.), Hodder has a routine to get him in the Jason mindset. On "slay days," he puts weird symbols underneath his hockey mask, which go hand-in-hand with the word "kill" he has tattooed inside his lip. Once the mask actually goes on, well, forget about any autographs or idle chit-chat. Hodder goes totally into Jason mode and tends not to be too friendly towards the cast. Plus, right before the cam-

eras roll, he paces around and lets loose a growl or three.

"It gets my energy up, especially if it's a violent scene," explained Hodder. "At the same time, it makes the other actors think 'Oh God! This guy is nuts for real!'"

Well, anyone could have a heart attack with such scare tactics. But when it comes to true evil, try being on the receiving end of a *FRIDAY THE 13TH* practical joke. The mother of all pranks took place while shooting *PART VII* in Alabama. It was late at night, near a lake, and production had wrapped for the evening. Hodder was returning to his dressing room via a shortcut through the woods when he came across his prey: "So it's 2 A.M., and I'm going back by myself with the mask still on because it was cold. I saw someone coming up the trail to the set, but I didn't recognize him as a member of the crew, so I stopped and he stopped. He looked a little nervous and asked, 'Are you with the movie?' Now, you have to remember what I looked like with the mask on, so I thought, *This guy is getting messed with*. So I just stood there and glared at him. Then he looked around, all nervous, and laughed, 'You're with the movie, right?' That's when I lunged at him and he took off in the opposite direction, gone! He didn't scream but he looked scared as hell."

"The next day the director asked me if I had met the sheriff. I think that was him." **CFC**



The faces of Kane Hodder: (L-R) *FRIDAY THE 13TH, PART VII: THE NEW BLOOD* ('88), *PART VIII: JASON TAKES MANHATTAN* ('89), and *PART IX: JASON GOES TO HELL* ('93), and *JASON X* ('02).

# BORIS KARLOFF

## Soul and Screams Mixed in His Monsters

By Gary L. Wood

“My father was eternally grateful for the difference between his real life and his on-screen life. He was a professional actor, and professional actors said to him, ‘You’re a star,’ and he said, ‘I’m a professional actor.’ But his earliest thought is that he was a professional actor, a lot of people in the public still did

not really know Boris Karloff. Though *FRANKENSTEIN* (1931) was the film that brought Karloff fame, it was actually his eighty-first film. And in this world of tortured artists desperately trying to stretch themselves to have wings while resenting the very role that brought them fame and freedom, Karloff was humble and grateful for what he had.

Said Sara, “He felt that an actor who was fortunate enough to be handed the role on which he could leave such an indelible mark, a contribution to his profession, a mark on a particular genre...He felt that he was the most fortunate fellow on Earth.”

But being *Frankenstein's* monster did not stop Karloff from branching out. Sara said, “He did a lot of humorous stuff. He did a lot of children’s stuff, a lot of Broadway—everything. He loved spoofing his own ‘boogeyman’ image when he did *THE RAVEN* (1963) with Peter Lorre and Vincent Price. And then he did *A COMEDY OF TERRORS* (1963) with them, and they had a wonderful time. I think my favorite movie is *TARGET*, because it’s simply my father playing himself: an aging horror star.”

In these days of tabloid fame, of rehab and domestic violence, Boris Karloff would be truly scary indeed. His only vice, several failed marriages, seems quaint by today’s standards. Sara said, “Well, he was a Brit. He was British and he was very funny, very private. He was very soft-spoken, very gentle, a very caring human being. He was well-educated in England for the counselor’s service before he left England to pursue a career in acting. He went to Canada first, and then down to the United States, eventually. So

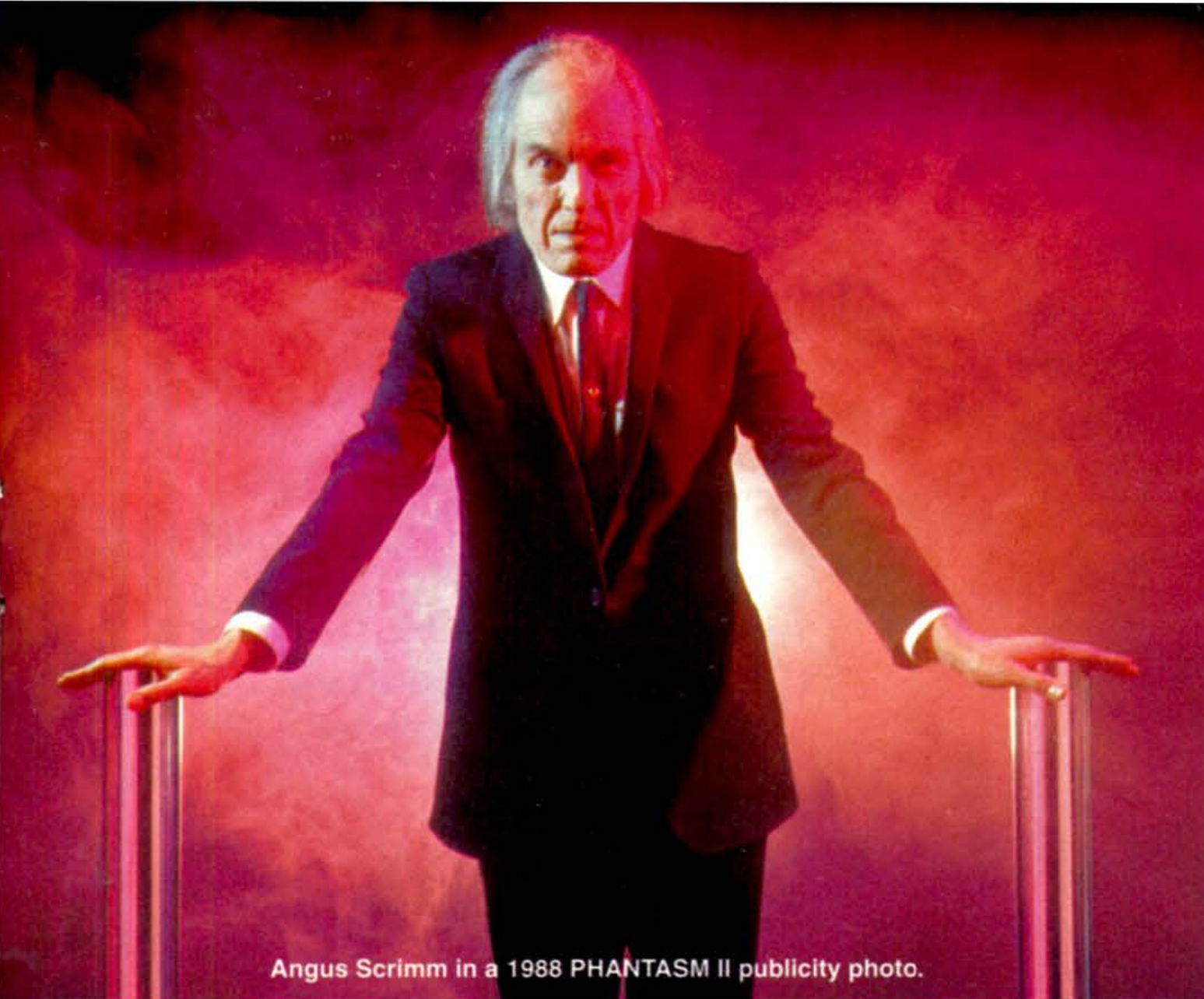
he’d been around a long time before anybody even knew who he was. As a person, he could not have been more different than his on-screen persona. He was well-educated. He was a voracious reader. He was articulate and more interested in other people—in the company he found himself [in,] certainly—than he was in his own voice.”

Though she approved and enjoyed *GODS & MONSTERS* (1998), stating that the actor who portrayed her aging father, “more closely resembled my father at that age than the public’s image of him,” she felt there will never be a movie made about Boris Karloff, simply because, “the problem with doing a film about my father is there’d be no hook for the box office, because there’s no scandal. He’s one of the very few people in the industry about whom nothing negative was ever written or said, so it makes it very difficult to sell tickets in today’s vicious society.”

Perhaps, in that reflection of who we have become, that is what is truly scary. —CFQ



THE TERROR



Angus Scrimm in a 1988 PHANTASM II publicity photo.

## 21. ANGUS SCRIMM

### Dead Man Stalking

*Highlights:* PHANTASM, PHANTASM II, PHANTASM III: LORD OF THE DEAD, PHANTASM IV: OBLIVION, SUBSPECIES, TRANSYLVANIA TWIST, MINDWARP.

Angus Scrimm doesn't indulge in machetes or knives—that's soooo Earth-bound. Instead, this graveyard ghoul prefers high-tech hardware: those semi-sentient flying spheres of razor-sharp blades and whirring cranial drills. It's that serial-killer-goes-Cuisinart twist that makes Scrimm's alter-ego, the Tall Man—and the PHANTASM franchise as a whole—pure creepy cult.

## 22. TONY TODD

### Death Becomes Him

*Highlights:* CANDYMAN, CANDYMAN: FAREWELL TO THE FLESH, CANDYMAN 3: DAY OF THE DEAD, FINAL DESTINATION, NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD 1990.



Tony Todd and Virginia Madsen in the 1992 classic, CANDYMAN.

Say his name five times in the mirror and Tony Todd will appear. No, not really, but thanks to his hauntingly deep voice and chilling demeanor, Todd has hooked fans as the vengeful Candyman. Next up, he's rumored to be on death's hit list in FINAL DESTINATION 2. Let's see how he likes being on the receiving end for a change.



Lillard (right), with Skeet Ulrich and Jamie Kennedy in the post-modern classic SCREAM.

## 23. MATTHEW LILLARD

### Schlock Jock

*Highlights:* SCREAM, 13 GHOSTS, SCOOBY DOO, GHOULIES III: GHOULIES GO TO COLLEGE, SERIAL MOM.

Originally regarded as a one-miss wonder, Lillard's laid-back, surfer-dude persona surfaced in SCREAM. He may be considered inseparable from frequent co-star Freddy Prinze Jr., but his pitch-perfect portrayal of Shaggy

in SCOOBY-DOO (and how scary is that?) has critics wondering if this actor may possess layers deeper than that superficial slick of Coppertone.

## 24. DONALD SUTHERLAND

### Supernatural Watcher

*Highlights:* INVASION OF THE BODY SNATCHERS, DON'T LOOK NOW, BUFFY, THE VAMPIRE SLAYER, THE PUPPET MASTERS.

Donald Sutherland has proof that extraterrestrials exist. He's also no slouch when it comes to hooking up with the Other Side or handling the occasional, impetuous Slayer-in-Training. Usually the voice of reason or the secretive government type, he's built a career on his ability to convey conviction in whatever reality he's thrust into, no matter how bizarre. He's the Fox Mulder of thespians, the man always willing to believe.



INVASION OF THE BODY SNATCHERS (1978)

## 25. COREY HAIM AND CORY FELDMAN

### Guilty Pleasure or Horror

#### Hacks?

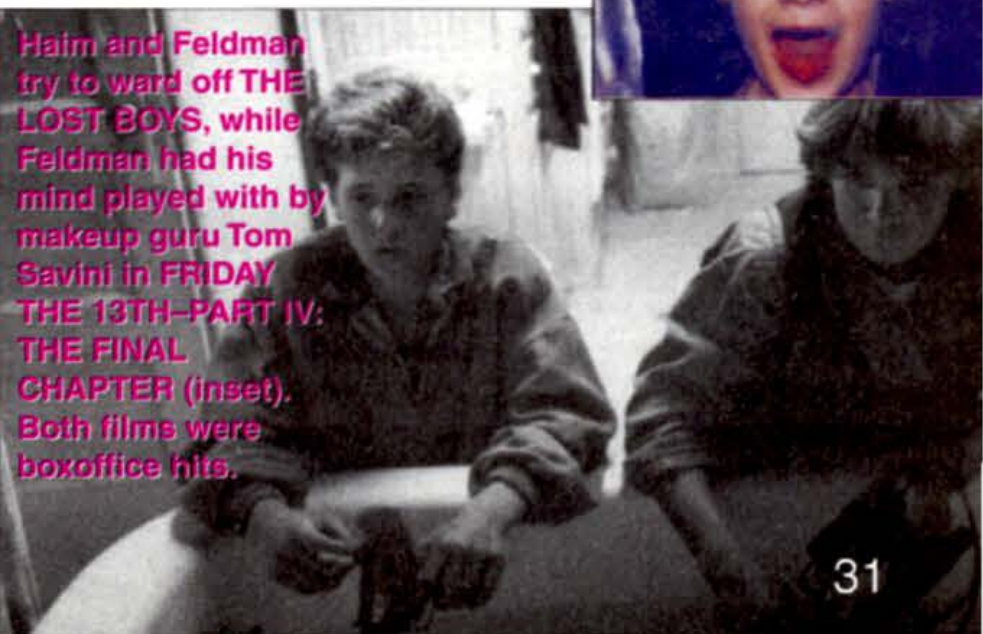
*Highlights:* GREMLINS, FRIDAY THE 13TH—PART IV: THE FINAL CHAPTER, WATCHERS, THE LOST BOYS, SILVER BULLET.

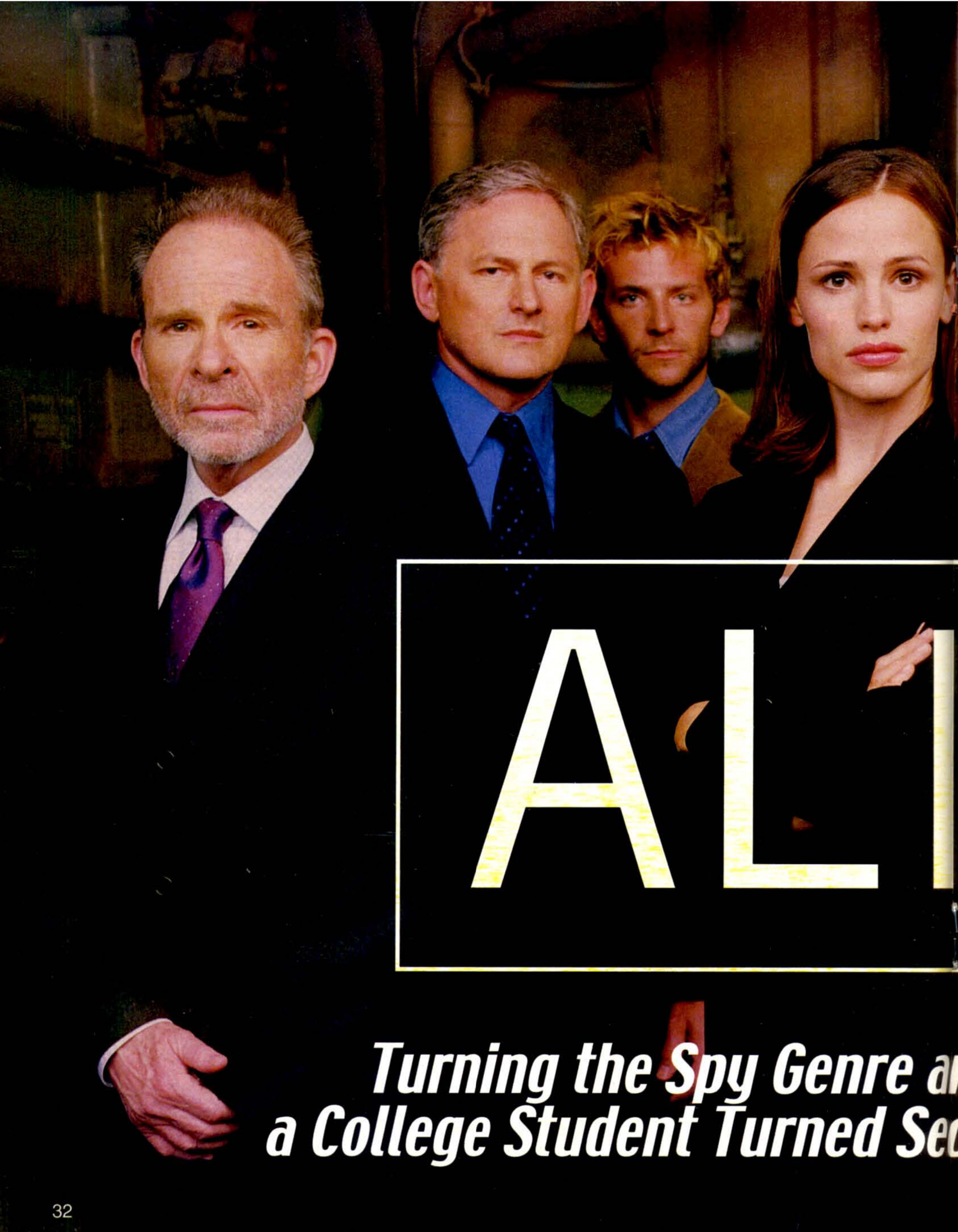
Their names either induce a roll of the eyes combined with a loud groan or a small eruption of laughter. But the two Coreys, Haim and Feldman, have racked up some redeeming credits, including the vamp pack flick, LOST BOYS, and FRIDAY THE 13TH: THE FINAL CHAPTER. One career suggestion: Try and cash in on the proposed LOST BOYS sequel. You need a hit like a vampire needs blood.

CFQ



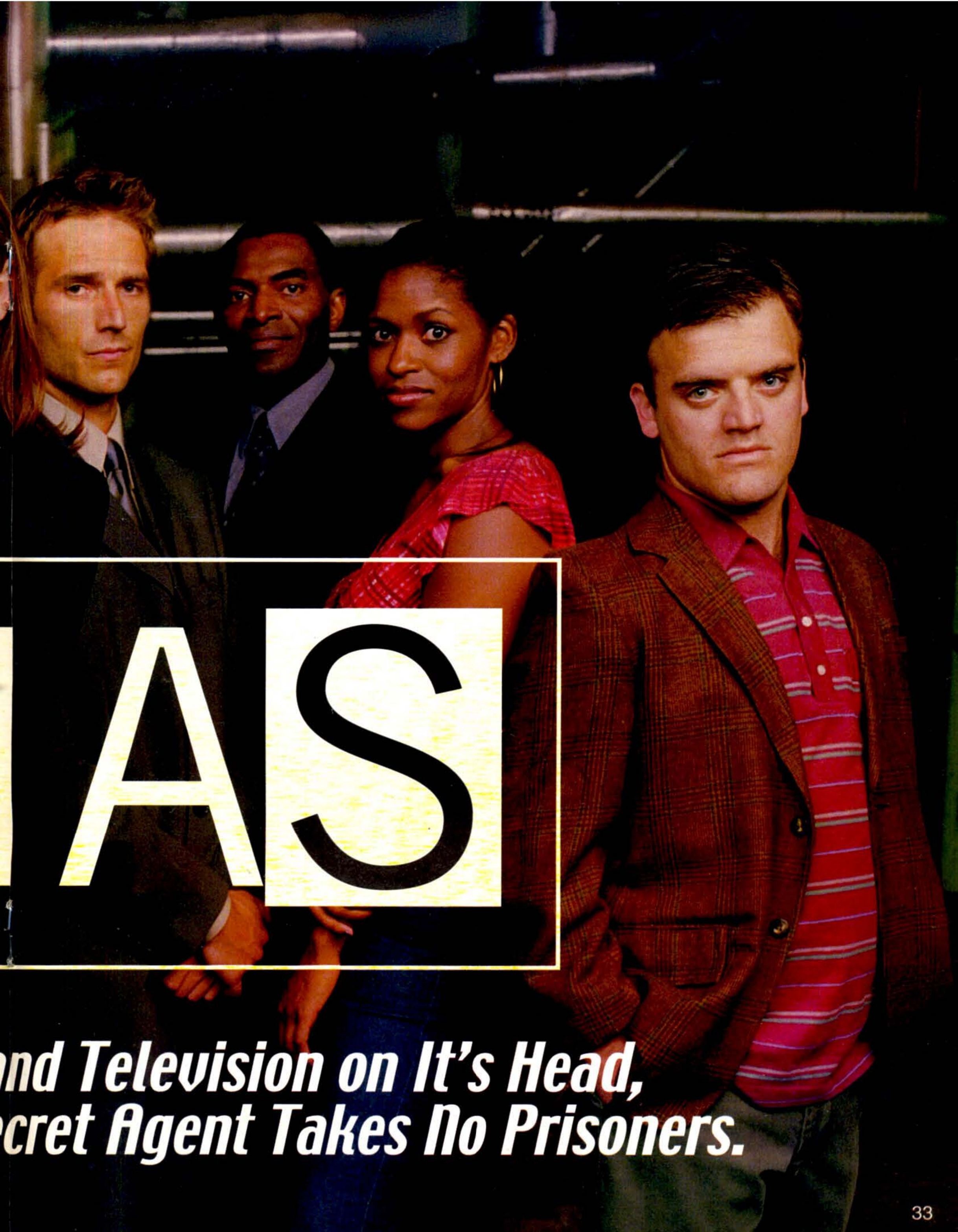
Haim and Feldman try to ward off THE LOST BOYS, while Feldman had his mind played with by makeup guru Tom Savini in FRIDAY THE 13TH—PART IV: THE FINAL CHAPTER (inset). Both films were boxoffice hits.





# ALL

*Turning the Spy Genre on its head with  
a College Student Turned Secret Agent*



IAS

***and Television on It's Head,  
Secret Agent Takes No Prisoners.***

By Edward Gross

Sarah Caplan returned from a scouting mission, not entirely sure of what she would find upon reaching home base. Curiosity rapidly turned to shock as she discovered pure, unadulterated chaos. The troops were doing their best, but it swiftly became apparent that this was one battle they weren't going to win.

"I felt like I had arrived in the middle of Vietnam," said Caplan, the memory still

**THIS YEAR'S MOLE:** College student Sydney Bristow (Jennifer Garner) discovers that the world of deep-cover espionage can be more perilous than even its seasoned operatives could imagine when she decides to turn double-agent against the super-secret SD-6.

Box") was transformed into a two-parter. Producer Caplan let out a sigh of relief, the forces of chaos were once more subdued, and all was good in the world.

Such is life on the set of *ALIAS*, the ABC spy drama that has effectively hooked a cult audience and is on the verge of "popping" in year two to reach mainstream viewers, much as *THE X-FILES* and *BUFFY, THE VAMPIRE SLAYER* did in their sophomore seasons. If you can imagine a night of passion between James Bond and *FELICITY*'s Felicity Porter, this series would be the likely result.

The premise of *ALIAS* is probably best

fiance. And when the head of SD-6 found out, he had him killed. That's when I learned the truth: SD-6 is not part of the CIA. I'd been working for the very people I thought I was fighting against. So I went to the only place that could help me take them down. Now, I'm a double agent for the CIA, where my handler is a man named Michael Vaughn. Only one other person knows the truth about what I do: Another double agent inside SD-6. Someone I hardly know...my father."

As series creator J.J. Abrams (the screenwriter behind *FOREVER YOUNG*, *REGARDING HENRY*, *ARMAGEDDON*,



"The premise of this show is ludicrous... you know, the whole idea that there would be a young woman who is sort of in college, in Grad school, who is a spy."

—*ALIAS* series creator J.J. Abrams

vivid. "They weren't even thinking about winning the battle; they were thinking about somehow getting through the night."

With no choice, she contacted her senior officer, waking him from a sound sleep. He understood what had to be done: At that moment, a single episode of *ALIAS* ("The

summed up in the show's opening credits, orated by series star Jennifer Garner, who portrays grad student turned spy Sydney Bristow: "My name is Sydney Bristow. Seven years ago I was recruited by a secret branch of the CIA called SD-6. I was sworn to secrecy but I couldn't keep it from my

JOYRIDE and the new *SUPERMAN*) explained it, the concept for this show came during a writer's meeting for *FELICITY*, a show which also happened to spring from his more-than-fertile imagination. "I said, 'You know what would just rock? If Felicity was recruited by the CIA, because then

she'd have to go and do these missions internationally.' You know: kick ass; be in these incredibly high-stakes, life-and-death situations; and then come back. She couldn't tell Ben, she couldn't tell Noel."

The real question was whether or not such a concept could fly on modern television. The answer was obvious: Of course not — which is probably why he went ahead and created the show anyway. "The premise of this show is ludicrous," Abrams admitted. "You know, the whole idea that there would be a young woman who is sort of in college, in grad school, who is a spy. On the face of it, when you say that, that's not necessarily a show that interests me from the outside. I really came to it from the inside and the idea: Who is this woman, what is her loss, and what are the relationships in her life? The thing that got me excited was the idea of telling the story of the world's most dysfunctional family, and telling it through the spy/intelligence/action-adventure genre. It was a fun way to tell an emotional story. I wanted to do a comic book and really commit to it and have the characters be real; people who are compelling, who you'd want to watch week-in and week-out. To me, that's my dream show."

On a surface level, it would seem that ALIAS is a direct descendent of such 60's spy adventures as 007 and THE MAN FROM U.N.C.L.E., mixed in with a heap-  
ing dose of LA FEMME NIKITA. But when this concept came to him, Abrams felt compelled to flesh it out and see what

journey it would take him on. "This just felt so exciting," he noted, "the idea of a show where there was this woman going through what I just talked about, and also got to experience some of the things that I think, on a purely sort of visceral, visual level, are incredibly fun to shoot. It just felt, to me, like this was an opportunity to do a show that was at the same time incredibly emotional and complex in terms of the relationships of the characters in a genre where you typically don't find that. I was really interested in the idea of a story of a young woman who not only has this loss, but has basically a non-relationship with her father and the idea that little by little, this young woman and this man begin to connect. That, to me, is something that, again, I'd watch in any genre."

One thing that this media savant has done is offer up a television series that is so intertwined from episode to episode in its storytelling and character arcs that it has created a rich, emotional tapestry that is quite unlike virtually any other show on television. "To me," Abrams offered, "if you do ALIAS simplistically, it's V.I.P. The good news and bad news about ALIAS is that you have to really watch it and go with it a couple of times before it grasps you or you grasp it. It's not something that you immediately understand, like, 'Oh, it's about a young woman who's a lawyer in Boston.' It doesn't happen that quickly.

There is a complexity to it. But the fun of the show is that there is ambiguity all around, and at the end of the day it's a show about a young woman who's just trying to live a normal life. She has to defeat some enemies before she can do that and, unfortunately, given the situation, she's working for the enemy. If you look at it as a show about a double agent who just wants to get out of the game, it's the easiest way to put it. What's fun about the show for me is that even with the bad guy for whom she works, we start to realize that he is not simply a bad guy. The father who she starts to feel, *Oh, he's sort of a sweetheart*, you start to realize has a dark side. There's a real ambiguity to the show, and I feel like it's something that people who watch it just love and really grasp onto. I think they're really vested in it because it isn't so simple."

Writer turned story co-story editor Erica Messer added, "Something that makes us different is that, sure, there's good guys and bad guys, but sometimes, within an episode, the bad guy, Arvin Sloane,



**METHOD IN HER MACHINATIONS:** Cast at the eleventh hour, Garner originally had doubts about her ability to handle the dramatic and physical demands of her role.

you can end up feeling sorry for.

I don't know

how many TV series blur those lines between, *You should hate this guy because he is bad and feeling sorry for him, and therefore all of our storytelling will show you how he is bad and make you hate him more.*

Add to the mix Sydney's balancing act between her college life and "work;" the impact of that on various relationships; the fact that one best friend, Francie, is going through boyfriend problems and another, a reporter named Will Tippin, is determined to uncover the truth about Danny's death, unaware that by doing so he may be setting up his own demise at the hands of SD-6. Then, of course, there's the various foreign enemy organizations Sydney has to contend with, and the ancient — though highly advanced — creations of 15th century seer, Milo Rimbaldi, that somehow seem strangely relevant to the twenty-first century. Oh, there's also a Rimbaldi prophecy that may have something to do with both Sydney and the end of the world. On top of





Left: Bradley Cooper as reporter Will Tippin. Right: Kevin Weisman as SD-6's answer to James Bond, Marshall Flinkman.

everything else, Sydney's mother, long thought to be dead, is actually alive and well and a KGB agent.

It's this complexity that has drawn such an incredible mix of talent both in front of and behind the camera. And make no mistakes about it — there is not one person working on *ALIAS* that isn't thrilled to be there. Exhausted, but thrilled.

Series composer Michael Giacchino nicely summed up the overall feeling: "What's amazing is that you get the next episode and you think, *Oh, God, not another*

*one. I just finished one.* But you start working on it, and you start having fun on it again.

"You never feel, 'God, I can't believe I have to do this.' You feel like you have something to live up to, because the people behind you just handed you something that's great and you have to do something that's worthy of that product. And I'm the last one on the line, so I have everyone else's work to support there. That's what makes it challenging and fun. J.J. sets a great tone for the work environment. You don't come away from anyone saying, 'Man, I hate that guy.' Which is so great. It's a unique situation."

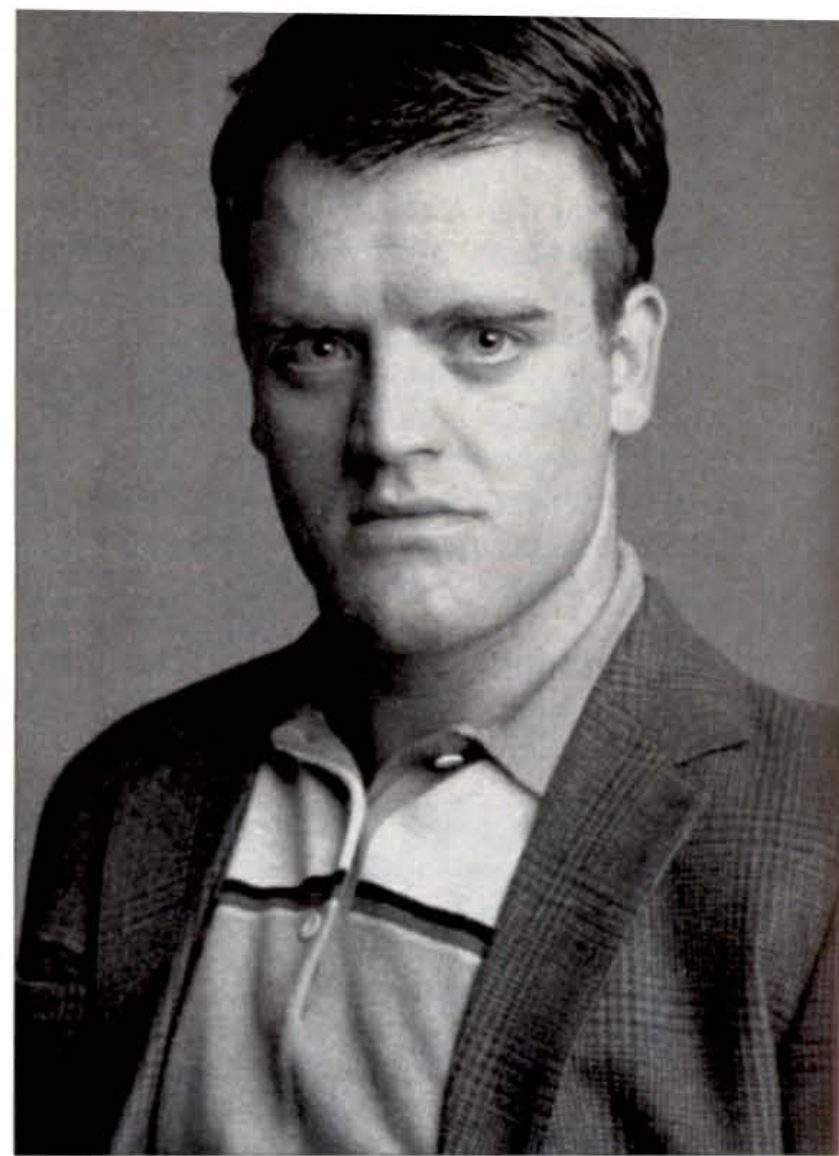
It's precisely that uniqueness that has drawn in people like director/actor/co-executive producer Ken Olin. Certainly no stranger to quality drama, having starred

in *THIRTYSOMETHING*, *BREAKING NEWS* and the amazing—albeit short-lived—*EZ STREETS*, and directed such shows as *THE WEST WING* and Abrams' *FELICITY*, Olin, frankly,

couldn't believe the opportunity that fell into his lap when *ALIAS* was presented to him. In fact, so impressed was he with the pilot that he refused to helm the first regular episode. "When they were looking for someone to direct the first episode of *ALIAS*, they sent the pilot to me," Olin reflected. "In my mind, that's one of the best pilots I've ever seen. I thought J.J. just had such a specific vision of what he wanted it to be. It was funny, it had action to it, it was moving at times, it was very vivid and very specific, and, in a certain way, it wasn't easily defined. You could say, 'It's this-meets-this-meets-this,' but then that wouldn't even do it justice.

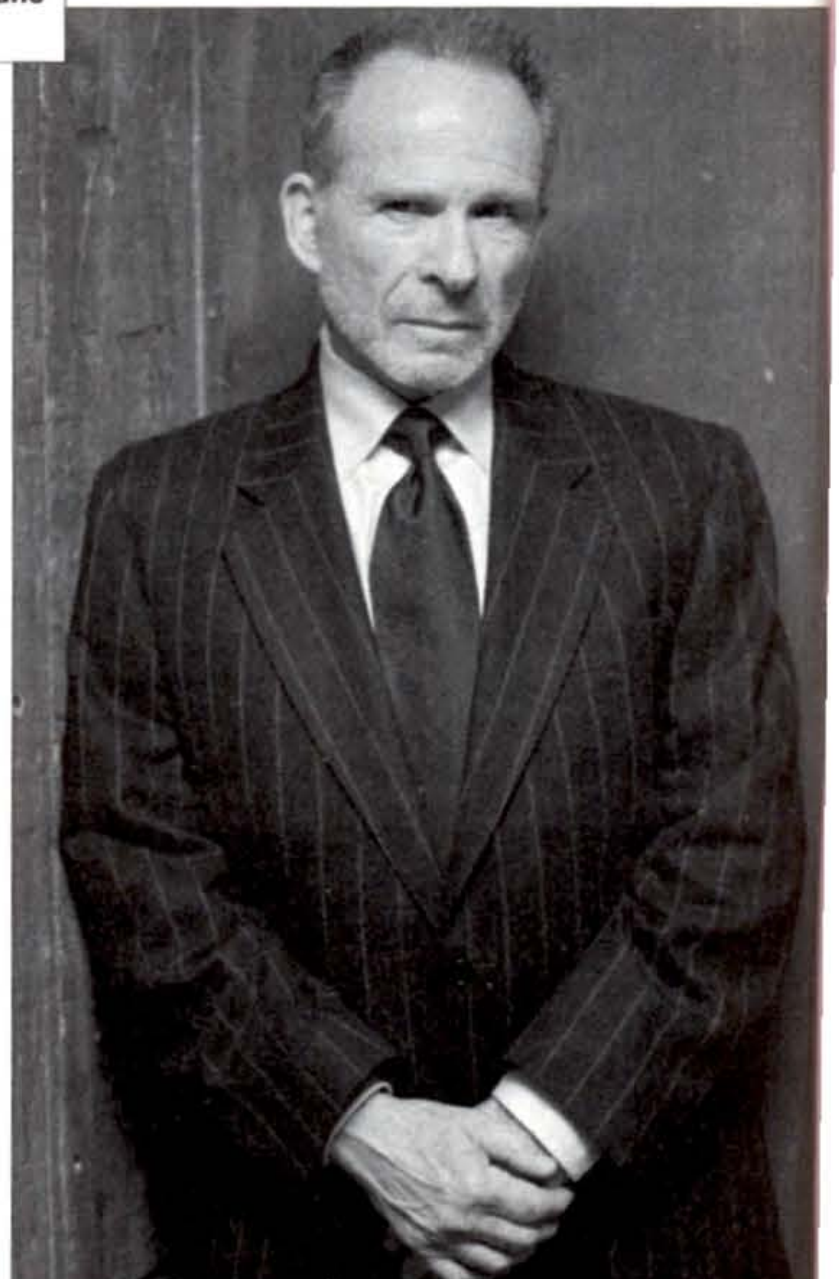
"I was getting tired of doing more versions of sincere TV. I think it's passe. There was an energy to this, it wasn't so serious, yet there was room for it to be intimate. So I said, 'No, I don't want to direct the first episode.' To me, it was a completely no-win proposition after that pilot. The pilot is extraordinary and there was no way the show was being brought in on an eight-day schedule. Then J.J. came back to me and said, 'Would you do the first one if we made you a producer/director on the show?' So I said yes. I was just in sync with J.J.'s point of view; how you get from the humor to the serious scenes; how you go from scenes of personal life to scenes of the most extreme kind of action/*MISSION: IMPOSSIBLE*/comic book drama. I understood it."

Olin acknowledged that probably the most difficult thing for him upon joining



the crew was simply having the stamina to work on the show on a weekly basis. "If you're in the gear of doing these quick shots and these fights and trying to find the humor in it and trying to find a vivid, heightened shot, to something that has to feel very intimate and very grounded, that's a difficult thing. We move from one to the other — that's the next scene up. It's taxing. It's always this balance in the show between what's real and maintaining a sense of humor. I think both J.J. and I are loathe to take this show too seriously. We take the relationships seriously, but the show is not meant to be

Sydney is torn between her feelings of friendship for partner Dixon Marcus (Carl Lumbly, left) and hatred for her Superior Arvin Sloane (Ron Rifkin, right).



# ALIAS

## Jennifer Garner

By Edward Gross

**B**etween spending a season as college student/secret agent Sydney Bristow and her hiatus as assassin Elektra in the big-screen adaptation of DAREDEVIL, Jennifer Garner should, by all accounts, be little more than a walking bruise. Yet she perseveres. It's the same drive that got her the part of Bristow in the first place.

"I trained before I ever got the role," Garner said. "I wanted the role so badly, and was so determined to do anything I could to help me get the part, that when I was auditioning, I actually looked in the Yellow Pages and found somebody who taught *tae kwon do*. I went every day for a month. Luckily, I was a ballet dancer growing up, so I had a pretty good aim with my kicks. But I trained from the minute I was auditioning, and then, once I got the role, it just kind of intensified."

Getting the role wasn't a sure thing. ALIAS creator J.J. Abrams wanted her for the part, having gotten to know her when she guest-starred on several episodes of FELICITY. Still, he wasn't one hundred percent sure she could pull it off. "I had this feeling that she could do the show," Abrams explained, "but I hadn't seen her do anything like it before. In fact, when we were in auditions, even she was concerned. She was

like, 'Why do you think I can do this? I know I can, but why do you?' I just said, 'I know you can.'

"Then what happened was that she got a play, and I realized that she couldn't do the show if she did the play. So I called up the ABC execs and said, 'She's going to do this play. It would be a disaster if she does this play, because she's by far the best one we've got.' And they said, 'Then cast her.' So we did."

Happy ending? Not just yet. "We started shooting," Abrams continued, "and I suddenly thought, 'Oh my God. Why do I think she can do this?' And Jennifer came to me and she said, 'I don't know if I can do this.' And I started to panic. We didn't test Jennifer, so it wasn't like it was a big test. We just cast her because we had to, it was an emergency."

"From that point on, what Jennifer did was remarkable. She committed herself so wholeheartedly. It was clear to me when it was the fight scene—halfway through, she was kicking the stunt man's ass. He had huge pads and everything and they were all soaked in sweat. If you look at the pilot, there's a huge dent in the side of the car that was caused by this gentleman throwing himself repeatedly into the car in the fight scene with her, so he was really beating himself up pretty well. Jennifer just clearly was the one."

CFQ



"The good news and bad news about ALIAS is that you really have to watch it, and go with it a couple of times before it grasps you or you grasp it."

—J.J. Abrams

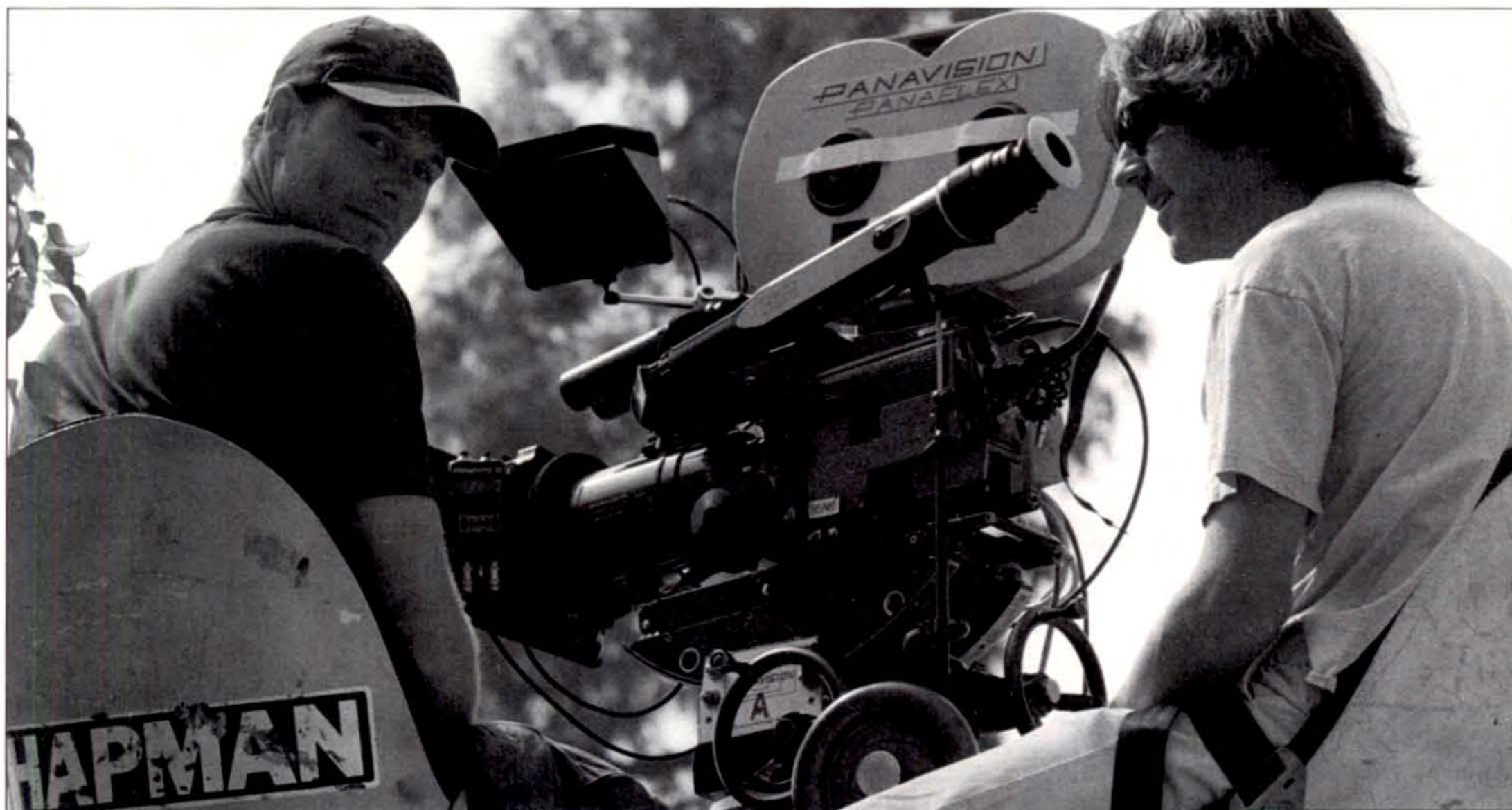
taken so seriously. And that's been a difficult balance."

Production designer Scott Chambliss added that part of ALIAS' appeal is that there's something particularly "ballsy" about having to work so fast and produce everything in a vivid short-hand that will ideally play with the audience. "That's a

make.

One genuine question before ALIAS made its debut was whether or not it or any of its brethren would make it to the air at all in the wake of September 11th. 24 had to drop a sequence in which terrorists blow up a plane, while THE AGENCY was forced to scuttle an early episode dealing

of the show is the right one," Bonvillain continued. "The fact that we're more of a James Bondian kind of fantasy and that she can sing, dance, and almost fly has made it less comparable to 9/11. But it was hard to come back and make the show, because it was so much about terrorism. A few weeks later we did an episode where we blew up a



specific skill of its own, when you don't have the time to noodle like crazy and change your mind three times. You have to trust your instincts, and I really kind of like that. There's this slavish quality about features, where the director always has so much time to change his mind—let alone someone like me. When you've invested six months into something and you change it at the last minute, the impact is much different than if you've invested a day and a half."

Although critics pegged ALIAS as a hit prior to the show's debut, its success was far from a sure thing. Just two seasons ago, those same critics felt that the new version of THE FUGITIVE would be a monster hit, while CSI was pretty much dismissed as a quirky drama. Two seasons later, Dr. Richard Kimble's run is long over and CSI is one of TV's highest-rated dramas, with a new spin-off (CSI: MIAMI) debuting this fall. Basically, buzz does not a hit show

with anthrax. ALIAS director of photography Michael Bonvillain recalled that two episodes of ALIAS had been shot when the terrorist acts occurred. "We got to work," he reflected, "and we were all kind of stunned. We couldn't work, my crew was all crying. I remember thinking, *There's no way this show is going to air*, because it was too horrible an event. We were at work, all acting like zombies. People couldn't remember their lines. We were shooting in a van that had a poster that said, 'Only you can stop terrorism.' You couldn't forget about it for a second. I said to J.J., 'You need to talk to the crew, because everyone seems to think we're being cancelled.' He called Disney and this executive drove down in a very nice gesture and said, 'There's no way this show is being cancelled. We're 100% behind it. This show is going to run.'

"I think that in some way, that because Sydney's fighting these bad guys, the mood

building, and there were people inside it. I said to J.J., 'I don't know how we can do this,' but as far as I could tell, nobody related to it or seemed to feel that it was in bad taste."

Abrams added that the stories they were developing for the series never changed in the aftermath. "We were never doing a show about real-life intelligence agencies or the actual terrorists they might be pursuing," he said. "We were a show about international intelligence and espionage. There were a few specific references changed here or there, but even those were oblique references to things that were connected to what happened, which we didn't want to show."

If anyone is challenged by ALIAS, it's the audience, which has rapidly discovered that many of the conventions of the medi-

The action behind the scenes of ALIAS isn't quite as dangerous.

um no longer apply when it comes to this show. For instance, rather than a four-act structure, Abrams introduced a five-act structure, which turns the opening sequence into an extended adventure that could easily be the pre-credit sequence of a James Bond film. The other is the nature of exposition. Often, the action unfolds as details are being revealed. "When we first started," said Abrams, "the five-act structure was just something that I proposed doing. Literally, the Writer's Guild, I was told, might have problems with it, and the network was concerned that it might be confusing. But it was *so* against protocol, I just thought, *Screw it, it's what the show should be*, so we started doing it. For me, it was a way of allowing an episode to flow into the next one. It's worked well sometimes and at other times I wish that we'd had some more satisfying material at the end of the show, either before or instead of a cliffhanger."

"Regarding the exposition: For me, it was a way of not only explaining something in an interesting way, but a way to condense the material so you didn't have such a linear scene play out as simple exposition and then you see [the action]. Instead, you do it simultaneously. It just felt efficient and also actually helped in terms of understanding what was going on."

## WRITING THE SHOW

"I was looking for an array of strengths and experiences that would add to the point of view of the writers' room," explained Abrams about the process of assembling his writing staff. "Some writers were stronger in terms of technical, high-concept invention. Others were more dramatic, character-based writers. John Eisendrath, who's a godsend, runs the room. He makes sure things are in order and that stories are getting broken well. He's a terrific writer who had lots of experience but no genre writing experience before *ALIAS*. I always make fun of him now when he casually makes references to miniature electromagnetic pulse devices or something — things he *never* would have referred to only last year."

For his part, Eisendrath, a former journalist before turning to script writing, took some of the tools of his prior trade and applied them to his new vocation. "When I wrote stories as a journalist," he said, "I always felt like I was learning something; that I was being paid to learn about whatever the subject was. When you write fiction, or television — particularly when you're watching relationship dramas like *FELICITY* — you're dreaming, you're adding, you're using your life experiences. But no one's life is so interesting that they don't, sooner or later, run out of stories. On *ALIAS*, I learned a great deal last year about this world, and about everything from the gadgetry to language that is used

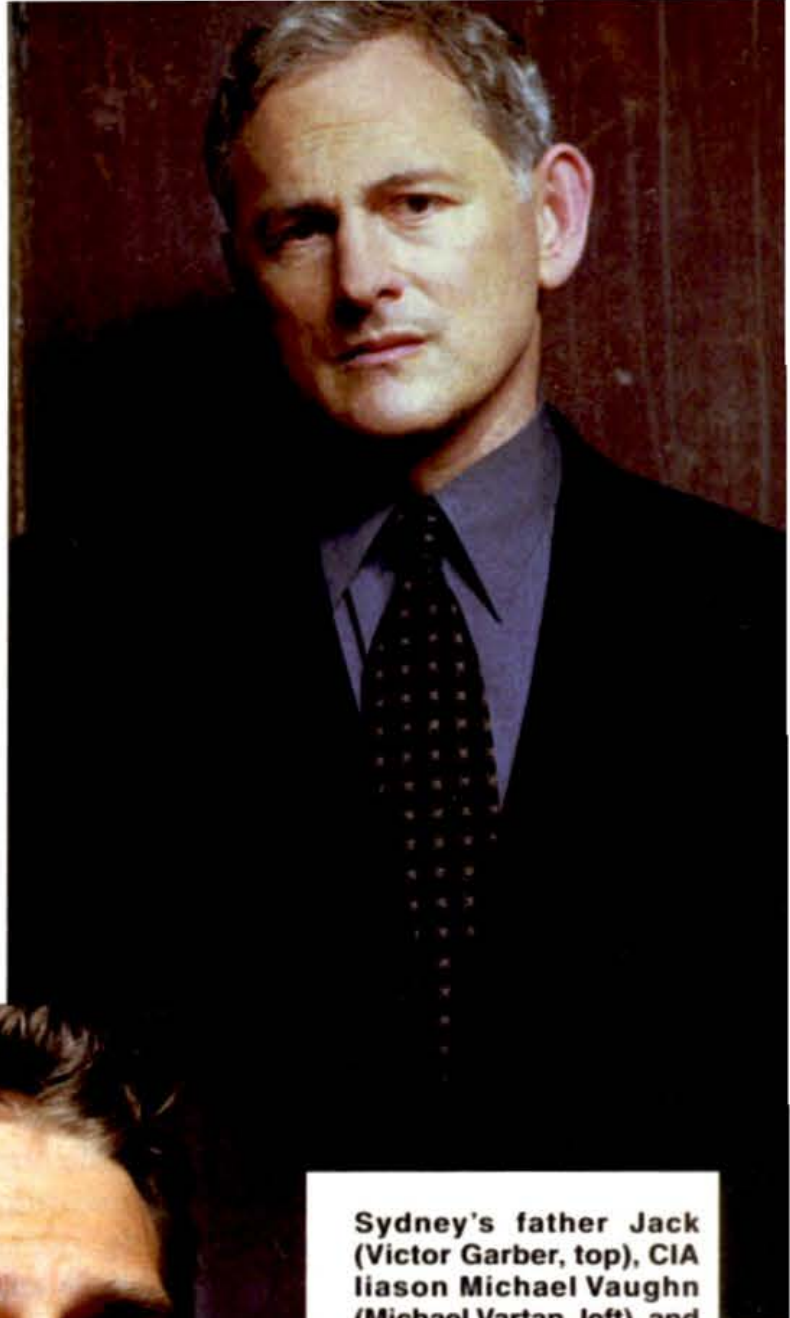
in this world, and it was a real education. It was extremely refreshing that way, to feel that as I was writing I was learning."

*ALIAS* has, to put it mildly, an eclectic group of writers, including, among others, Eisendrath (*BEVERLY HILLS 90210*, *MALIBU SHORES*, *MODELS, INC.*), Jesse Alexander (*EIGHT LEGGED FREAKS*), Jeff Pinkner (*EARLY EDITION*, *PROFILER*, *ALLY MCBEAL*, *ALLY*) and the writing teams of Roberto Orci and Alex Kurtzman (*HERCULES: THE LEGENDARY JOURNEYS*, *XENA: WARRIOR PRINCES*) and Debra Fisher and Erica Messer (writer assistants on *PARTY OF FIVE* who impressed Abrams with their spec scripts for *ONCE & AGAIN* and *SEX IN THE CITY*).

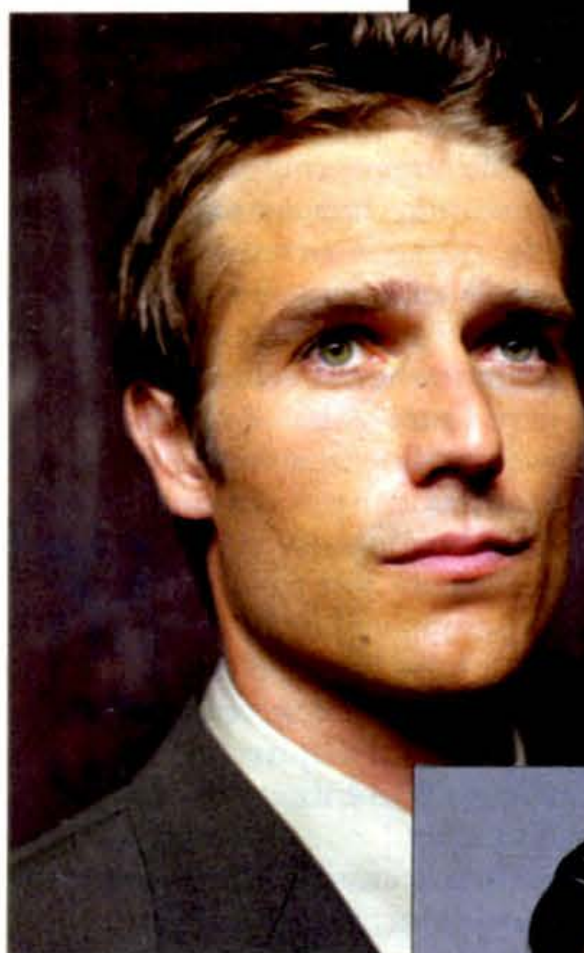
Eisendrath emphasized that the writers' room represents a true opportunity to engage in the free exchange of ideas. "It's not just people talking at each other, but it's people building on ideas. Somebody suggests something, someone doesn't agree with it but maybe thinks there's a piece of it that works and we'll go in another direction with it. It's never been my experience that people, no matter how capable they are, can go off on their own and come up with something that will have their ideas as well thought-out or stories as well-formed as when they're 'subjected' to the group."

"We'll take a week as a general rule to break a particular episode. We'll always start with the character stuff, the action stuff comes about last. In the beginning, we spend all our time thinking about the character stories and then we will, over the course of that week, start breaking it down scene by scene, so that by the end of the week on this board we sit in front of, every scene we think should be in the show will be written out in one or two-line form. Then someone will go off and write that episode, and we'll realize those scenes were in the wrong order or were the wrong scenes for that episode and we'll redo what we have to. It's a living, breathing thing until it's on the air."

Added Debra Fisher, "All of the writers — there are ten of us, including J.J. — sit in a room and we have the entire season, one through twenty-two, mapped out in



Sydney's father Jack (Victor Garber, top), CIA liaison Michael Vaughn (Michael Vartan, left), and best friend, Francie Calfo (Merrin Dungey, below).



terms of what the big movements are going to be, and in which episode. Then in groups of three or four, we'll figure out



# ALIAS

## Action and Stunts

By Edward Gross

For stunt coordinator Jeff Habberstad, having handled the stunts for SPIDER-MAN was the perfect training ground for ALIAS, particularly considering that Sydney spends an awful lot of time in mid-air, either leaping off of buildings, or delivering a series of gravity-defying martial arts moves. "Wire work was my specialty," said Habberstad. "In truth, it's all stuff that has been done before, and as long as it's not another SPIDER-MAN, where everything is brand new and huge, we can handle it. If you're prepared, things go a lot quicker and smoother."

"I was fairly heavy-handed early in the series about trying to make it new and better and cool-looking. That was clearly

why they hired me in the first place, to bring some of the feature-looking stuff to a TV show. You can take stuff we've done previously from a mechanical point of view, but from the whole engineering side, making something happen and designing those mechanics into a whole new sequence is a challenge. I had meetings with the writers where I could go in and give them a list of things that we could do in a fairly efficient manner time-wise, and they would build story points around that. I've got to say that the writers have been real creative with how they've taken what I've suggested we can do, and built it into a story that's not a way of building it in simply to do a stunt."

In one case, the crew went to Pasadena to

shoot a ninety foot drop involving Sydney (Jennifer Garner). A few weeks earlier, Habberstad had gone in and pointed out that he had the mechanics and technology to do such a drop, making it look as though she was in a screaming freefall. A couple of feet above the ground she would stop and release herself.

"I went into the meeting and said, 'Marshall could design something that goes in her backpack. She pulls it out, clips it on and sails off this building. Or she can have a little thing she clamps on a building, a pole goes out, she hooks herself in and starts dropping. A little counter counts out how far she's gone.' Well, they took those ideas and turned them into this bit where she pulls a wire out of her backpack, clips it onto the

hand railing, and all in the same move jumps off the building. She has a harness on that you see on camera. She falls ninety feet, stops a couple of feet

above the ground, releases and runs away."

Have any of these stunt ideas not worked? Habberstad doesn't pause an instant before responding: "I won't get myself into something that plain won't work. If it's something completely brand new and gets into a whole new engineering thing, it wouldn't be practical for a TV show."

No one is aware of the limitations of the television medium as David Morizot is. Having to coordinate innovative and exciting fight sequences is a continual challenge. "You're always fighting the clock," Morizot said. "As far as television is concerned,

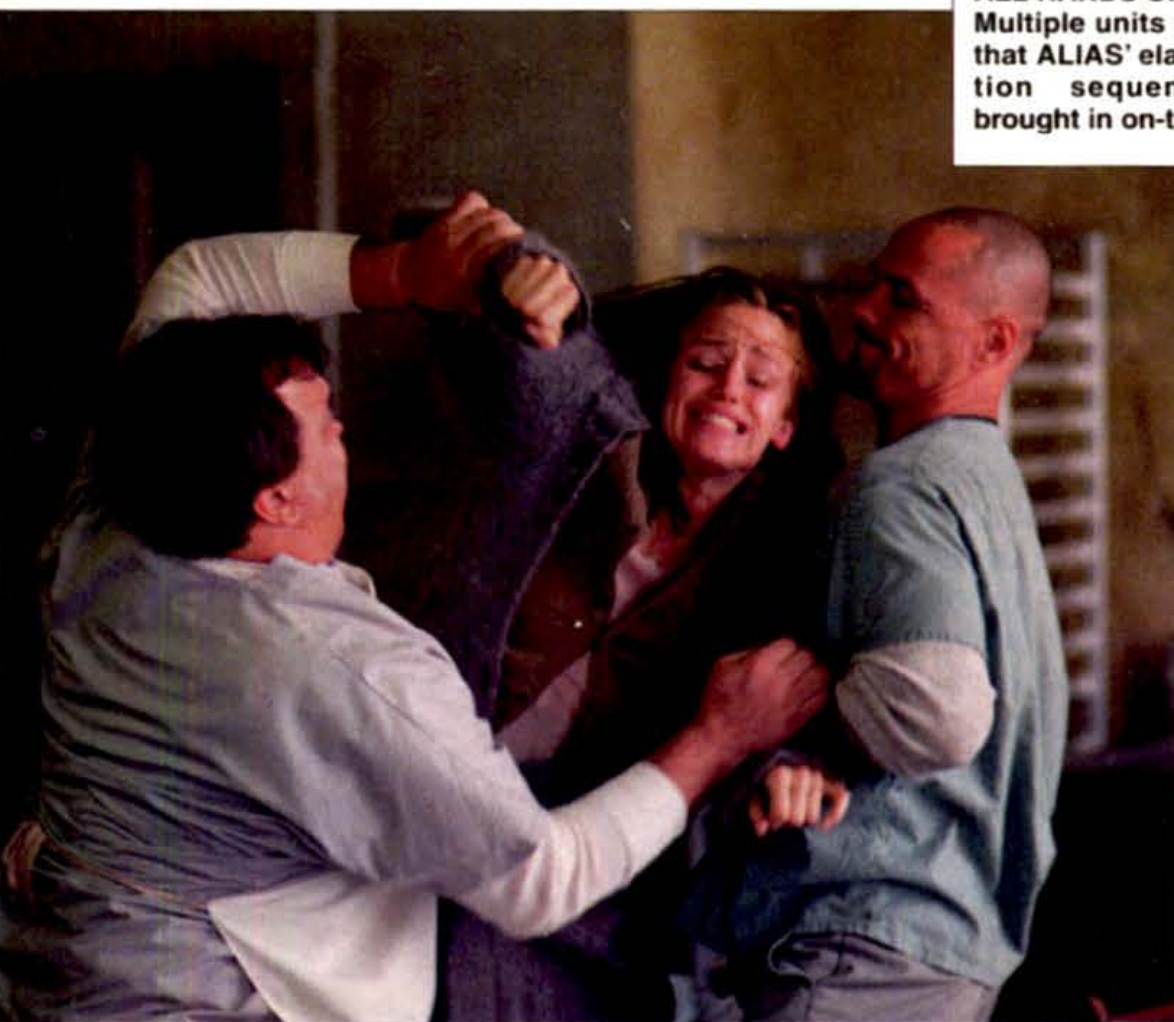
you have to create an hour-long movie every eight days. I try to be as flexible as I can."

Somehow, Morizot manages to keep things fresh on ALIAS. "There are only two arms, two legs, a head, and a certain number of moves that you can do as far as any fight is concerned. But the situation of *how* you do them is where you keep the freshness alive. Knowing what the opponent is going to do versus what Sydney is going to do. Maybe she's in a little bit more danger in this fight than she was in last week's fight, or maybe she's in more control of this week's fight. There are always those elements that are easier to manipulate than just the fight itself."

"I try to have one special move per fight. Not necessarily a huge moment, but something interesting, explosive, or maybe something unexpected. Something that's not a normal punch or kick. Jennifer and the producers like Sydney to be extremely graceful. Luckily, Jennifer is graceful too."

"Sometimes it's hard, because you don't necessarily have a good, locked-down location for the fight, or maybe the location could change, which could really throw a wrench into the situation if I designed the fight assuming we were going to be in a certain location. One of the biggest assets we have in every fight is the fact that Jennifer is more than willing to do what needs to be done to make the fights as good as they can be. She's such a versatile athlete and she picks up moves and executes them very well. All of the poise and grace you see in Sydney Bristow, she actually has as Jennifer Garner." **CFQ**

**ALL HANDS ON SYDNEY:** Multiple units make sure that ALIAS' elaborate action sequences are brought in on-time.





**UNDERCOVER STANDOUT:** Sydney's costume changes would cause a scandal at the real CIA, but are the perfect fit for ALIAS' fantasy espionage.

in detail what's happening. When we get to episodes ten or eleven, we see what we've inherited from the previous episodes, and then we start to break down each act, put everything in its place, and start to break down each storyline. Trying to come up with great, amazing missions is the first and last thing we do. After we've developed the specifics of the episodes, John Eisendrath will cook up a great outline. You generally have a little snippet of what each scene will be and then you're off."

ALIAS is one show for which a reset button most definitely does not exist. Stories and characters do *not* end an episode

where they began. "There are definitely cliffhangers to the episodes," Abrams said, "but, to me, that goes back to the old school of serials or the BATMAN TV series. We've done some shows that have a more resolved ending, but most episodes end in a cliffhanger. It's okay, as long as you have some sense of conclusion in an episode, or some sense of accomplishment, so that it doesn't feel like the whole thing is totally open-ended."

Naturally the real question about this approach is whether or not it's more fulfilling for a writer than penning standalone episodes. According to Alexander, "It's an amazing storytelling challenge trying to keep the emotion up and keep the story consistent. This year, instead of telling 22 separate stories, we've been telling one big epic, because it just keeps rolling over into the next one. It's just been one long story. It would

be fun to be able to step out of that box where we could tell a different kind of story where she didn't get a briefing at the end of act two and didn't go on a mission in act three. Maybe we can step out of that a bit next year, but

this year we couldn't."

#### PRODUCING THE SHOW

"I've said this before," pointed out J.J. Abrams, "anything you see or hear on ALIAS is because of Sarah Caplan. She has the impossible job of being handed scripts and figuring out how in the name of God to make them. She's very collaborative, an incredible puzzle-solver, and she's got this English accent that no one thinks is real. She's a godsend producer and we could never produce the show without her."

Caplan not only insists that her accent is

real, but she admits that she was getting a bit bored working on FELICITY when Abrams told her that he would like her to come over to ALIAS and produce that show. Caplan, who also produced the episodic THE OTHERS, dove into ALIAS and quickly realized just how complicated the show was. "It's difficult to produce a show like this because of its nature," Caplan pointed out. "You're prepping and shooting at the same time. It's hard because it's a big show. It's as big as X-FILES, [where they] approached it by having three units shooting at the same time. We very quickly, within a few days, knew that we needed the same. I don't think ABC was very prepared for something like that. I don't think they've ever done such a big action show, so they didn't know what it was like."

For Caplan, an ALIAS episode begins when she's handed a copy of the script, usually a first draft. A quick breakdown is done in order to figure out a particular approach and determine the means of achieving the varied locations the script will usually call for. "That's something that has to be fixed quickly," Caplan explained, "because it takes a while to find places and get permits and that sort of thing. I bring the art department in on locations and we do sort of a rough scan. Then I try and talk to the director and we go through his ideas about the events and stunt stuff. Then we bring in the stunt people and effects people and we sit down and hash that out. We're running around scouting quickly, just to figure it out. As it gets more detailed, we start going, 'Okay, we need to change this. Can we make it work like this?' Sort of a series of negotiations take place. Then we board it out with the assistant director and things start to become more fixed. We start to budget, and as the ramifications of the budget come in, we say, 'Okay, we can't go there, we'll do this instead.' It's a very fluid thing, but we have to move as fast as we can."

"After 9/11, we had some problems because a lot of the locations we liked to use were no longer available to us. Places like airports and municipal service buildings — like the Department of Water — became off-limits to us. Luckily our show has sort of a tongue-in-cheek quality or a little wink to the audience, so we manage to slip by a lot of the problems that other shows faced in the wake of 9/11."

#### DIRECTING THE SHOW

When an ALIAS script makes it into the hands of its director, one thing that J.J. Abrams and Ken Olin don't do is dictate how the show should be shot. "Although we never tell a director how to direct," clarified Abrams, "we always have a tone meeting, where I go over the script and explain the point and motivation and style that each scene should have. How they



want to cover a scene and communicate with the actors is up to them, of course."

The obvious result is a series where no two episodes necessarily look alike. "Listen," offered Olin, "there's something to be said for that. I know that when NYPD BLUE first began, Greg Hoblit was very specific with directors about the way that the show was shot and done. That's one approach and it's been very successful. There are shows that you set a style and you make sure all the directors coming in understand that that's the way the show is shot. It's not the approach that we take."

The trick, interjected Abrams, is to hire people with vision and a sense of energy and motion to their work. "Also," he said, "people who work well with actors, because performance is really important to us, which might come as a surprise to some people who look at ALIAS as strictly an action show."

"The consistency is in the editing room," Olin pointed out. "There is a consistency of pace. It's always made clear to directors that we want to be able to heighten the pace of a scene with coverage. The frustration for us comes when a director has locked us in to a way of cutting a scene that doesn't allow for us to amplify the pace. With the exception of coverage, we don't tell people how they should shoot the show."

"I directed six episodes and probably the equivalent of two others in terms of second unit, and then J.J. and I split being in the editing room. So there isn't time for one of us to stand on the set. We could only be in so many places at once, and it works itself out."

## PRODUCTION DESIGN

"[Production designer] Scott Chambliss is sort of the unsung hero of the show," said Abrams. "In our show, everything is dependent on believing where you are. In many ways, it's a preposterous premise — she works in this underground lair, under a bank in downtown Los Angeles, which is this high-tech agency and the enemy of the CIA. You have to believe that she's real, so her home has to look real. If you're going to believe that SD-6 exists, it means that the place has to appear to look functioning and cool, but not so sci-fi that you think it's stupid. The CIA is incredibly different, yet you need to believe that it's the CIA. And then, we're supposed to be traveling around in every episode, so somewhere close to Burbank, California we need to be in the Far East or Columbia. Locations have an enormous role in this, but Scott Chambliss basically creates our world."

"In the episode where they're supposed to go in this underground lab where there's this sub-zero room, with so little and less time, Scott had to create, along with our brilliant prop designer, this chamber with this active robotic arm. It was a lot of work and one of those things where it's so easy to do wrong, and they really managed to deliver."

When considering production design on ALIAS, one has to wonder what elements are more challenging than others. "Ten things just leaped at my face," smiled Chambliss. "What happens is that J.J. and the writers have great ideas for wild things, and they always write things that are way too big to do in every episode. So the biggest actual challenge for me in terms of providing a world for them to shoot in is actually being part of the process in wrangling it down to something that we can actually do."

As an example, he points to episode five, "Doppelganger."



As a double-agent, Sydney's (Jennifer Garner) life often depends on her father, Jack (Victor Garber, top) and CIA agent Michael Vaughn (Michael Vartan, left).

As originally conceived, about mid-way through the episode Sydney was supposed to be on a battleship to retrieve something. At this point in the series, the creative staff was still locking down which elements of the show worked better than others. "One of the successful ones," Chambliss opined, "is when Sydney gets dressed up in something exotic and super sexy, but is also undercover and doing some stunt or something. For this episode, they didn't have her in anything that was even remotely appealing. As a matter of fact, on the battleship she was going to be in military fatigues, big vest and heavy artillery. It was not fun. We also couldn't find the kind of ship that we needed in short notice."

"I pointed out to the director that she had to look really hot as opposed to look-

ing like another guy. We didn't have anything stylish or stylized in the show. For the first time, everything was looking really down. I thought, 'Why don't we throw her into some fancy art gallery some place in London? And we do some really high style, very modern, little bit surreal but stylish environment for her to do something — to steal the thing she needs to steal. But it's her being sleek and cat-like and sexy. And that's what changed. Suddenly she was in this all-white, very modernistic looking thing where she was in a green crochet dress and big black wig and she was doing gymnastics off pipes on the ceiling and landing in stiletto heels. I always loved that sequence because it's really stylized.'

"J.J. and the D.P. have all these movies that they love from the '80s and early 90s," Chambliss explained, "as well as James Bond and BRAZIL. All the tech in those movies, all of that stuff they love and really wanted to see on the show, is really dated now. Everything that's being done now, all

the technology that's being designed, is so super sleek that it's either nearly invisible, or utterly innocuous.... Everything is the size of a pack of cigarettes or smaller, so it doesn't have that kind of impact. And it veers a little too far into goofy for me. Still, there's always the tension of giving something to J.J. that will satisfy him, looks fun and looks like it does something, but at the same time looks like something that could conceivably be designed right now. The technology that [gadget master] Marshall gives to Sydney is always so sleek and sophisticated, rather than the big-ass guns that get made or the super duper computer component things, which are just stupid."

## SHOOTING ALIAS

For cinematographer Bonvillain, part of season one of *ALIAS* consisted of having to readjust his way of thinking. When things began, the plan was that five days of an episode would be shot out at various locations, with the remaining three days of production being filmed at the Disney Studio lot. "That kind of changed due to budget concerns and all that post-9/11, Disney stock stuff," he said matter of factly. "I don't know if they actually cut our budget back, but the first few episodes went over as most shows do and they finally got the reins down on everything. We ended up shooting on the lot quite often, which is not my favorite place to shoot because it doesn't really look like Paris or any place except Disney. That was hard and a real grind. But at least our days were fairly short."

"The hard part was keeping your enthusiasm and your standards while trying to keep things looking new. People are always saying, 'Oh my God, where did you shoot all this stuff?' You say, 'That was in Malibu,' and they say, 'God, it looked like Bali.' Locations, I think, are key to the show, besides Jennifer, of course. Just the idea that she travels around so much is really important. If I get a great location, I'm happy as a clam."

So, if being "stuck" on the Disney lot is such a challenge, how does he get around it? One person he credits is production designer Scott Chambliss, as well as the fact that Disney is essentially a small town with a great drapery and prop department. "They can find giant gates if you need them," Bonvillain enthused. "You can put that in the foreground and shoot with a really long lens. There's not a lot that you can't do, especially at night with a 400mm lens. You can pretend you're anywhere, really. We also have a guy named Kevin Blank who does the computer effects who can give you the Eiffel Tower or whatever on top of our cheesy little back lot at Disney. So you put the Eiffel Tower in the background, shoot it long in sketchy lighting, and it looks like Paris. That's the main way we deal with it."



"A lot of the locations we deal with are industrial and that's pretty universal all over the world. You change a few signs, get the right ethnicity of people and the right uniforms, and you're in business. Basically, whatever you put in front of the camera creates what you're trying to create. We don't stay on it long enough for you to tell."

## THE ALIAS CONNECTION

Obviously, from the different points of view presented, the crew of *ALIAS* is about as tightly-knit as one could hope to find. Their creative unity and devotion to a common vision has resulted in a television series of uncompromising quality. Why, has *ALIAS* connected with viewers in the way that it obviously has?

"Without Jennifer, the show is nothing," stated composer Michael Giacchino. "People say, 'Oh, it just happened to be her. Anyone else who would have gotten the job would have made the show as good,' but it's not true. Some shows work well and are cast right and other shows don't work well whereas, if maybe they were cast differently, they might have. Watching her is like watching someone actually going through this. She's so believable. It's so funny, because in real life she's such a goofball."

Debra Fisher, who along with partner Erica Messer will become story editors of the series in year two, offered, "I think that people are really connecting to this female, driven character who is out trying to do good. She's your best friend who lives right next door; who is living a double life. I think that's really attractive to people. With everything that happens in your daily life, and what's going on in the world, it's nice to sit down in front of the TV and go with this roller coaster ride and have fun with it. It is a little bit comic book at times, and we don't take ourselves completely

seriously. I'll speak to some friend who will say, 'Oh, she's a woman, she would never be able to get out of that situation,' and I'll be, like, 'Oh, go along with it!' Ultimately, I think people are having fun with it."

Added producer Jeff Pinkett, "What struck me about the show, and what continues to be the most fun about it, is that it connects on so many levels, encompasses so many different genres and different dramatic forms. It can encompass comic book action, Hitchcockian suspense and very real drama. I love that it's a female in a world we haven't really truly explored from a female point of view before. Although some of the action is a bit far-fetched, the emotional grounding of the show is utterly real, and the world that's around us constantly surprises her. It surprises us as writers in terms of what we can do, what we can get away with and what we discover about our characters. It's a unique mix of genres that allows us to do that."

With year one behind them, the cast and crew of *ALIAS* are looking forward to getting started on season two, having accomplished much in the way of their goals during their freshman year. Although no one is discussing specifics of the upcoming season, it's obvious that everyone is grateful for their success—a success driven home by the fact that ABC actually renewed the season several months before the network announced its fall schedule, a highly unusual move.

If anyone is most proud of what they've produced over the past year, it's J.J. Abrams. "For those of you who know TV, it never happens like this. There are so few exceptions to the rule that it's a grind. But we're doing a show that we all truly love. It's fun as hell. It is so much hard work and, given everything, people have such an appreciation for where they are and what they're doing."

CFQ

# ALIAS

## Special Effects

### *Here, There, and Everywhere: Digital Matte Paintings are a Budget-Conscious Spy's Best Friends*

By Edward Gross

"Nothing is more important than visual effects," said ALIAS creator J.J. Abrams. "The selling of locations and the selling of certain stunt sequences are key pieces to making a storyline function. Kevin Blank, who is a brilliant visual effects supervisor, often has to manufacture a matte painting with only a day's notice, in addition to an effect or stunt sequence. They almost always look as good as anything you'll find in a film. The visual effects on the show are a crucial element to our overall magic trick, which is to make you believe that you've gone somewhere and seen something every week that is atypical for a television series. As someone who has always been an effects fanatic—and anyone who watches the show knows how deeply my psychosis goes—it's really something that I put enormous importance on.

"Some of my favorite shots that he's done are rather subtle. In the first episode after the pilot, at the beginning, [Sydney] jumps in a car, the car drives off, and the Eiffel Tower is in the background. Then she's in Moscow, traversing from one building to another on a wire. You see the city in the distance and the camera tilts down and there she is, moving across. That was one of my favorite kinds of shots, because it's simultaneously a matte painting that went down and revealed Jennifer Garner herself going across this wire. We were in downtown L.A., and it couldn't have been farther from Moscow, so it was a stunt and a visual

effect going on simultaneously.

"I think what ends up happening is that it sort of blends into the overall sequence and the sequence just works. It's one of those things where they're so easy to do wrong, and Kevin almost always avoids doing it. He constantly turns out wonderful effects, and I'm entirely grateful."

In a career that has included HERCULES: THE LEGENDARY JOURNEYS, XENA: WARRIOR PRINCESS, and, briefly, the latest STAR TREK spin-off, ENTERPRISE, Kevin Blank comes to ALIAS with an extensive effects background and, at the beginning, unclear expectations. "Initially," he said, "they thought the visual effects of the show would be the occasional matte painting: Put the Eiffel Tower in the background, here. It turned out to be quite a bit more than that. The first half of the season didn't have a whole lot, but the second half really picked up the pace to the point where the finale has a massive amount of visual effects. The more we do, the more people like it, and the more they keep pushing us to do more. It's a good thing."

Yet, despite ALIAS' growing reliance on effects, Blank is quick to emphasize that the show is not, by any stretch of the imagination, an effects show. "As a matter of fact, a lot of the visual effects are invisible to the audience, or they're not aware that visual effects are in play. When someone says, 'Do you guys fly all over the world?' It's like, 'No, we don't.' We make use of stock photography and photographs, do a little

digital manipulation, and place things we photograph in Los Angeles in other countries. We go to San Pedro, Malibu—we move around quite a bit within the LA area."

To offer an idea of the type of visual effects involved in the production of ALIAS, Blank turned to the episode "The Confession" and the sequence in which Sydney was supposed to be traveling to Crete. "We shot in the mountains behind Simi Valley, and we shot down on to the San Fernando Valley," he said. "There was this big bunker platform, and she's supposed to go underground into a weapons bunker. It's supposed to be Crete, so we painted in the Aegean Sea and a little coastline in the distance. At the location up in the hills on this big slab of concrete was an abandoned bus and a helicopter. They were nothing we could move or anyone else was going to move, so we digitally removed them.

"Then, in the episode, an explosion happens underground. She comes out of the bunker and a big flame shoots out after her and lights up the whole thing. Well, half the image was a digital painting. What we had to do was match the light created by the fire across the digital painting, and the area with the helicopter and bus was removed. We had to put in CGI brush blowing in the wind to match what was going on on the left side of the screen. People look at this and no one knows that half that frame is completely fabricated on the computer."

Then there was episode seven, "Color Blind," in which Sydney goes to Argentina



**GOTTA GET AWAY:** The Los Angeles area is good for ALIAS' more utilitarian settings (above). But when the show needs to take its protagonists overseas, the locations come courtesy of digital effects.

300-foot cavern. She climbs down a ladder and into a 300-foot cavern that was actually a twelve-foot high by twelve-foot wide set at Disney. "She goes to the bottom, and the scenes where she's running around the cavern were shot in the Bronson Caves," Blank explained. "But when she goes back up the ladder to chase Anna Espinosa [a character more or less the equivalent of BUFFY's Faith], they end up having a fight *on* the ladder. We had shots where I shot one separate element of Anna and another separate element of Sydney, and then put them in the same shot so you saw this big, tall cavern and a long ladder with the two of them chasing each other in the same shot. But they were shot separately. Some people say, 'Where'd you go to shoot this?' The honest answer is: 'A very dinky, unimpressive little set that we augmented.'"

For a fairly foolproof method of determining what's real and what's CG in

and enters a hole in the ground which leads to a

ALIAS, one could employ the following rule of thumb: Whenever the action shifts to a foreign country, it's a straight stock shot. If, however, the actors are seen in that foreign country, it's a visual effects shot.

As an example, Blank points to "The Coup," which was supposed to take place in Hong Kong: "We see this big, elaborate shot of the Hong Kong skyline, and a man coming out of the subway goes over to the front of a building. Out of that building comes a guy running, and another guy who executes him. So we tied Hong Kong into our actors playing the scene out. Sometimes we just take a digital still photograph and make a painting out of it. "In this case, we were on the Disney lot, and we had a camera pan into the front of the ABC building, where the whole scene was shot. I did a film in Hong Kong a couple of years ago, so I have some friends there who took pictures of a subway station and sent them to me over the Internet. Then we built a subway station in Electric Image, textured it with the real textures and signage that would be on a Hong Kong subway station, and put that in.

"Then, we had an actor walk across the Disney lot, and roto-scoped him through the visual effects portion. So we actually had an extra walking through the visual effects shot, carrying us into the front of the shot of the Hong Kong skyline with moving boats in the harbor and everything like that. We put that into the background, and then we painted a railing along the water and put additional actors in, sight-seeing. So you have this shot that was shot on the Disney lot, coming over to the ABC building, and when you're done you have a Hong Kong [citizen] coming out of the subway station, looking at the Hong Kong skyline with moving water and boats, tracking along to the front of this building. We covered up the ABC logo with a stationary sign we created in Photoshop.

"To me, that shot was a lot of fun. Most people didn't know that was a visual effects shot. It's not like we had Jennifer Garner in the shot, but it was following the action into another place where a guy ran out and a scene followed immediately. It tied the locations together really nicely. I thought that one was pretty cool." **CFQ**

# A CREATOR'S GUIDE TO ALIAS

# ALIAS EPISODES

By Edward Gross

## TRUTH BE TOLD

Written & Directed by J.J. Abrams. Original Airdate: 09/30/01

Sidney reveals the truth about her life as an agent for SD-6 to fiancé Danny Hecht, which ultimately costs him his life. Learning that SD-6 is an enemy to America and not a part of its intelligence force, she goes to work for the CIA so that she can avenge her lover's death. En route, she discovers that her estranged father, Jack, is also a SD-6/CIA double agent.

J.J. ABRAMS: "One of the most incredible experiences for me—I got to write, produce and direct this bizarre hour of TV. It was the first time we were all doing it, so even though it doesn't seem entirely different, there was a sense of working on something that we all felt we wanted to keep doing."

"There was an amazing energy while we were doing it. Figuring out who the character of Marshall was was a real struggle, because I wanted him to be funny, but not a stand-up comedian."

**THE ARGUMENT AGAINST TOO MUCH HONESTY IN A RELATIONSHIP:** Sydney Bristow's decision to reveal her secret life to her fiancé leads to tragic results in "Truth Be Told."

"When the network saw the pilot, they were very excited. They loved her and the energy and they felt that there was this incredible potential for this young woman to realize all sorts of adventures. I think they felt that, in a way, they had the next generation espionage action/adventure show."

## AND SO IT BEGINS

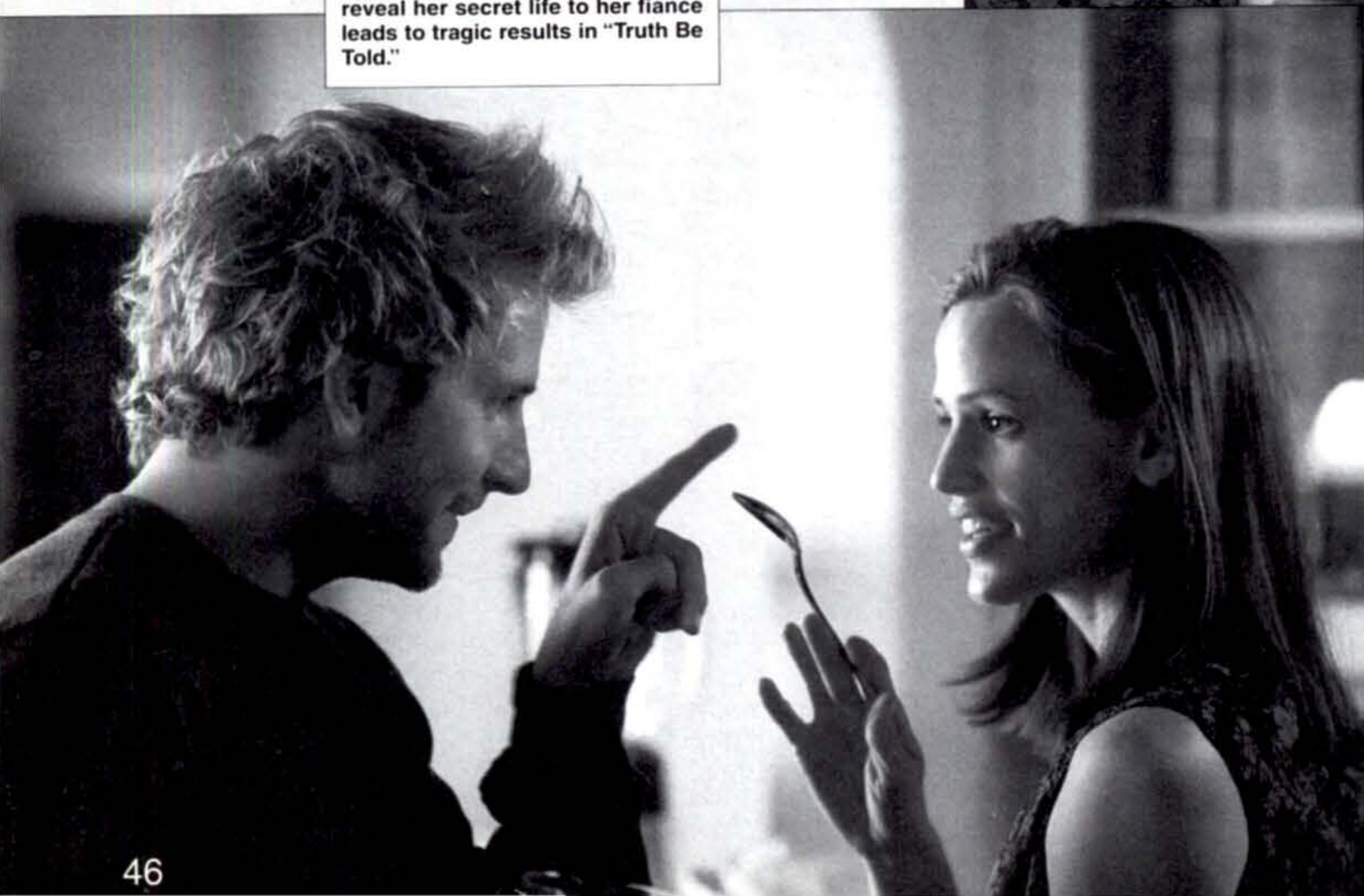
Written by J.J. Abrams; Directed by Ken Olin. Aired: 10/07/01

When Sydney inadvertently allows SD-6 access to a nuclear weapon, she has to do everything in her power to keep it from falling into the wrong hands. Meanwhile, Will begins asking questions he shouldn't about Danny's death.

J.J. ABRAMS: "A cool moment was when Vaughn opened up the map and showed Sydney just how far-reaching SD-6 is. It just said to the audience, 'She is as overwhelmed as you might be watching this.'"

## PARITY

Written by Alex Kurtzman & Roberto Orci; Directed by Mikael Salomon. Aired: 10/14/01



When Sydney heads to Madrid to obtain a half-century old piece of drawing by a seer named Milo Rambaldi, she goes up against her K-Directorate opposite agent, Anna Espinosa (think Buffy going up against Faith). While this is going on, Will finds his investigation into Danny's murder moving myriad directions.

J.J. ABRAMS: "A somewhat troubled episode at first, because it was the beginning of our series and we still didn't quite know how to do it. We sort of over-scheduled things and the director, Mikael Salomon, didn't really have enough time to do some of the work he needed to do. It was one of those 'you learn a lot from it' kind of episodes, though it ultimately end-

ed up working out really well."

#### A BROKEN HEART

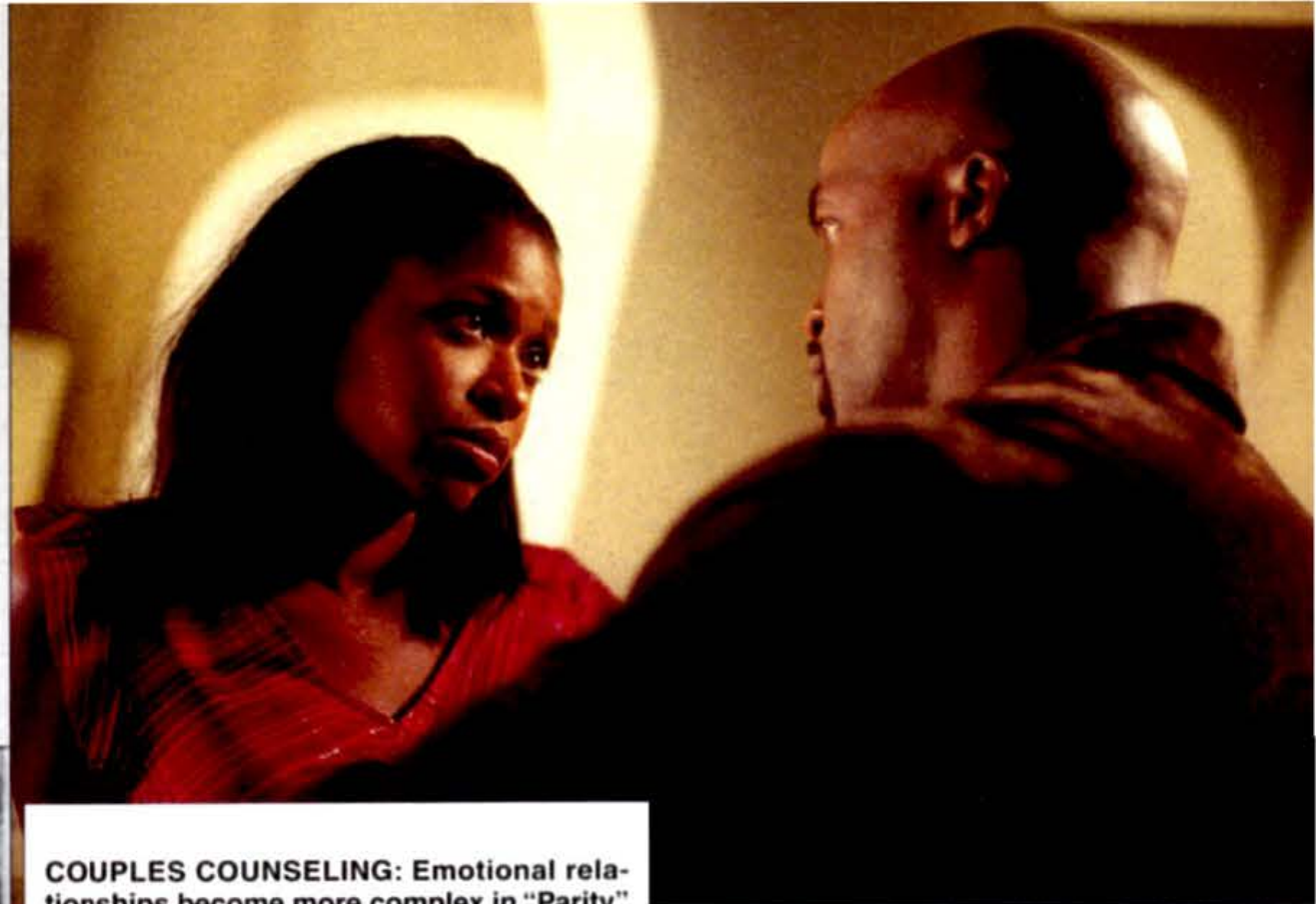
Written by Vanessa Taylor; Directed by Harry Winer. Aired: 10/21/01.

Sydney and Anna Espinosa vie for the same Rambaldi artifact, with Sydney ultimately proving victorious in a fierce battle. At the same time, her difficulties in functioning as a double agent are somewhat reconciled when Vaughn offers his continued friendship. On the homefront, Francie confronts her boyfriend, Charlie, who she believes is cheating on her.

J.J. ABRAMS: "The thing about

Myriad twists highlight this episode involving the CIA's attempts to plant a device that will provide access to SD-6 computers from any location. Meanwhile, Sydney and Dixon head to Germany in an effort to obtain an innovative vaccine.

J.J. ABRAMS: "In that episode, as a guest star, was Kevin Mitnick, who is probably the world's most famous hacker. As a goof, I called him and said, 'Look, I'm doing this show and if



**COUPLES COUNSELING:** Emotional relationships become more complex in "Parity" (above), while Sydney takes clean-up duty in "And So It Begins" (left) and a renaissance artifact must be snatched away from an arms dealer in "A Broken Heart" (below).



a letter of intent to his parole officer, but also the computer he was using—the monitor and the keyboard could not be connected. He could type on the keyboard, as long as he was not actually using the computer. It was crazy. I actually had him sign my iMac. He didn't touch the computer, he just touched the pen."

#### RECKONING

Written by Jesse Alexander; Directed by Dan Attias. Aired: 11/18/01.

Sydney goes undercover in an asylum in Romania to get close to a seemingly mad assassin who holds the key to a genetically-secured encoder device. Simultaneously, Sydney begins to question her father's loyalty, wondering whether or not he was actually a part of the KGB.

J.J. ABRAMS: "What I liked about the episode is that it was such a funny example

of the dichotomy of the show, in that you've got this pretty real, dark, intense, disturbing Romanian asylum, and in the same episode you have the same character in this swank art gallery posing as this French society girl. It just kind of felt like we were starting to get our footing with what the series was between episodes five and six, 'Doppelganger' and 'Reckoning.'"

#### COLOR BLIND

Written by Roberto Orci & Alex Kurtzman; Directed by Jack Bender. Aired: 11/25/01.

Sydney must work with the assassin Shepard to escape from the asylum they're trapped in. En route to that escape, she learns that Shepard, a victim of mind control, is the one who was responsible for Danny's murder. Instead of feeling a need for vengeance, she continues to work with him. Back at SD-6, Sloane suspects that there is a mole and begins an investigation.

J.J. ABRAMS: "It was an interesting episode, because it was really the beginning of a reconcile of sorts between Sydney and her father. It's also the beginning of Sydney grappling with the murder of her fiancé. And because Sydney didn't seek revenge against Shepard, it showed the kind of odd com-

that episode that was most interesting was that it was the beginning of this whole Rambaldi story we were telling, where Sydney finds this glass piece that ends up connecting to a story later on. It's an episode that has Angus Scrimm as Agent McCullough, who's in the PHANTASM movies. I have been a fan of his and those movies and just called him in as a favor to see if he would be in the pilot, which he was, and we've had him back a number of times."

#### DOPPLEGANGER

Written by Daniel Arkin; Directed by Ken Olin. Aired: 10/28/01

you want to come on and play this CIA computer expert, it would be fun.' This is the guy who had the FBI and CIA up his ass so hard that they were coming out his mouth. He was in jail without a trial for three years and was finally let go. One of the stipulations of his release was that he could not use a computer for three years. We had to not only send





**BUGS OF ALL SORTS:** Surveillance techniques and vaccines drive, "Doppelganger" (left); Sydney gets culture in "Reckoning" (above).

plexity of this world."

#### TIME WILL TELL

Written by Jeff Pinkner; Directed by Perry Lang. Aired: 12/02/01.

Sloane's suspicions that Sydney is the mole intensify, resulting in her taking a lie detector test. Later, her cover secure, she heads to Italy to learn that the glass crystal she found several missions earlier fits into a Rambaldi-made clock, which in turn provides the location of a cavern which houses the so-called "Book of Rambaldi." Sydney sets off to Mount Aconcagua, but so does Anna Espinosa.

J.J. ABRAMS: "One of the best episodes. Initially we were saying that she went to Mexico to meet with a clock builder who might actually be the maker of an ancient clock. We changed it to Italy at the last minute. The synopsis, I know, says Mexico, but it's not. 'I loved how we started to use, for the first time, pieces of missions that we'd seen three episodes earlier in a way that you do not anticipate and we actually didn't mean. But what you start to do is give the audience a sense that there is cohesion to the stories, and it isn't all just random. The trick is doing it so that it works while you're making the show, but also that it's kind of a reward for loyal viewers.'"

#### MEA CULPA

Written by Debra J. Fisher & Erica Messer; Directed by Ken Olin. Aired: 12/09/01.

There are still some concerns that Sydney is a CIA mole within SD-6. To try and ferret out the truth, an elaborate assassination plot is hatched. Vaughn's intentions, naturally, are to stop anything from happening to Sydney, but Jack comes to him and argues that if the CIA takes any action whatsoever, it will prove the theories about Syd-

ney to be right.  
J.J. ABRAMS: "It was the first time that Jack and Vaughn really go up against each other, and that was kind of wonderful. I love seeing their dynamic."

#### SPIRIT

Written by J.J. Abrams & Vanessa Taylor; Directed by Jack Bender. 12/16/02.

Initially Sydney is sent to Semba Island, off of Kenya, to track down the arms dealer Ineni Hassan. Eventually she finds herself in Cuba, attempting to rescue her father who, while walking a line between CIA and SD-6, has been captured by Hassan.

J.J. ABRAMS: "The thing that I love about 'Spirit' is that Jack did a very dark thing to save his daughter. I realized that people actually loved Jack for doing it. Also, it had one of my favorite visual tricks in this series: She was supposed to go to an island off the coast of Kenya, but it was ac-

tually off the coast of Sunset Boulevard in Hollywood. We shot it at this retro-chic motel called the Standard. This shot, where you see this gorgeous Kenyan coastline and the water, was one of my favorite matte paintings that we did."

#### THE CONFESSION

Written by J.J. Abrams & Daniel Arkin; directed by Harry Winer. Aired: 01/06/02.

Sydney travels to Crete to retrieve a device known as "The Package," which Hassan has placed within a missile silo. Meanwhile, Vaughn seems to have evidence that Jack worked with the KGB. Sydney is ready to believe this, until she is hit with a stunning revelation: actually it was her mother who was a KGB agent.

J.J. ABRAMS: "When we were filming this episode, the stunt woman was running out of the bunker and someone hit the explosive charge a touch early. She wasn't injured, but came close to getting really injured. It was bad timing. In fact, if you watch it from every camera angle—and we used a couple of them—you can see that the stunt woman who is running out of the building as the enormous ball of fire chases her out is entirely engulfed in flames for quite a few milliseconds, and that's longer than you want to be engulfed in flames. But I loved that whole sequence."

"It was the eleventh episode that we did, and we always planned that in the middle of the year Sydney would learn that her mother was involved, and that at the end of the year she would meet her. What was nice was that it was sort of following the plan."



**REAL AVERSIVE THERAPY:** An asylum isn't any sanctuary when Sydney attempts to rescue an imprisoned assassin in *COLOR BLIND*.

#### THE BOX, PARTS 1 & 2

Written by Jesse Alexander & John Eisendrath; Directed by Jack Bender. Aired: 01/20/02 (Part 1); 02/10/02 (Part 2).

Former SD-6 agent McKenas Cole (Quentin Tarantino) leads a military coup of SD-6 headquarters to retrieve a vial of liquid that is a part of the Rambaldi artifacts. Desperate to help Sydney, Vaughn completely breaks with protocol and enters SD-6 territory to help out in the situation.

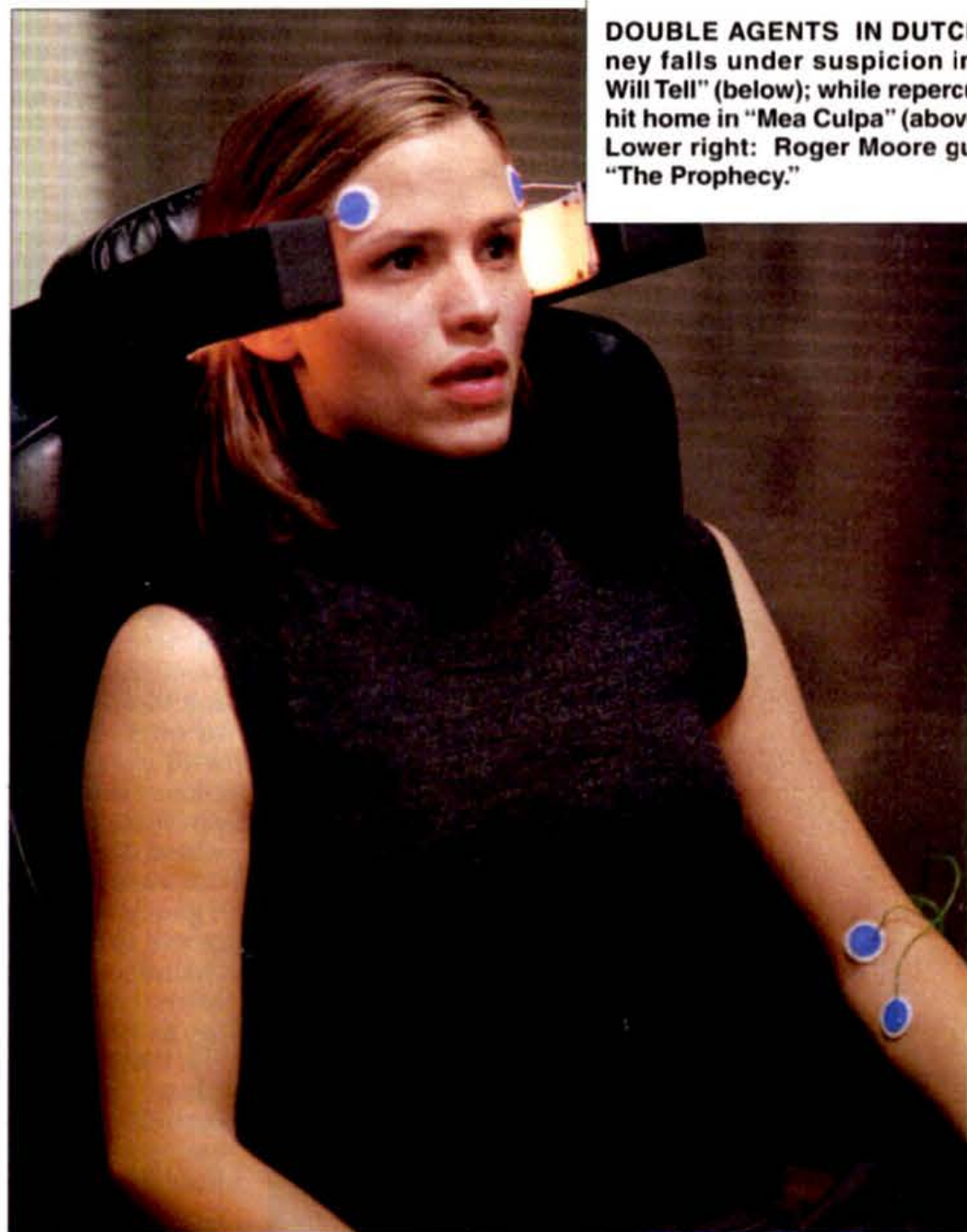
J.J. ABRAMS: "Those episodes were originally going to be one episode, but we ended up expanding them to two because while shooting them we realized it was going to be way too long. The problem was that

who's just got a piece missing. Quentin did a great job."

### THE COUP

Written by Alex Kurtzman & Roberto Orci; Directed by Thomas Wright. Aired: 02/24/02.

Sydney and Dixon head out to Las Vegas to infiltrate the group connected with McKenas Cole's armed invasion of SD-6 headquarters. While dealing with that crisis,



**DOUBLE AGENTS IN DUTCH:** Sydney falls under suspicion in "Time Will Tell" (below); while repercussions hit home in "Mea Culpa" (above right). Lower right: Roger Moore guests in "The Prophecy."

we still had nowhere near enough material to make it two episodes, so we ended up writing an enormous amount of other stuff to fill in the extra time. Among those things that we added were some of my favorite elements of the series, including the character of Haladki, who ended up at the end of the show being the mole who worked for Khasinaw.

"I have to say that, without question, the most fun thing about doing these shows, marvelously directed by Jack Bender, was working with Quentin, who is just the most energetic person you'll ever meet in your life. He is so funny, has such passion and was such a fan of the show, that he was thrilled to be part of it the way I would be thrilled to be part of a James Bond movie. We really tailored the script to him—suddenly, it was Quentin Tarantino and I thought, 'Screw this, it has to be a Quentin Tarantino show; we just have to be crazy about it.' We just decided that we had to go out and be balls-to-the-walls nuts and make it about this guy

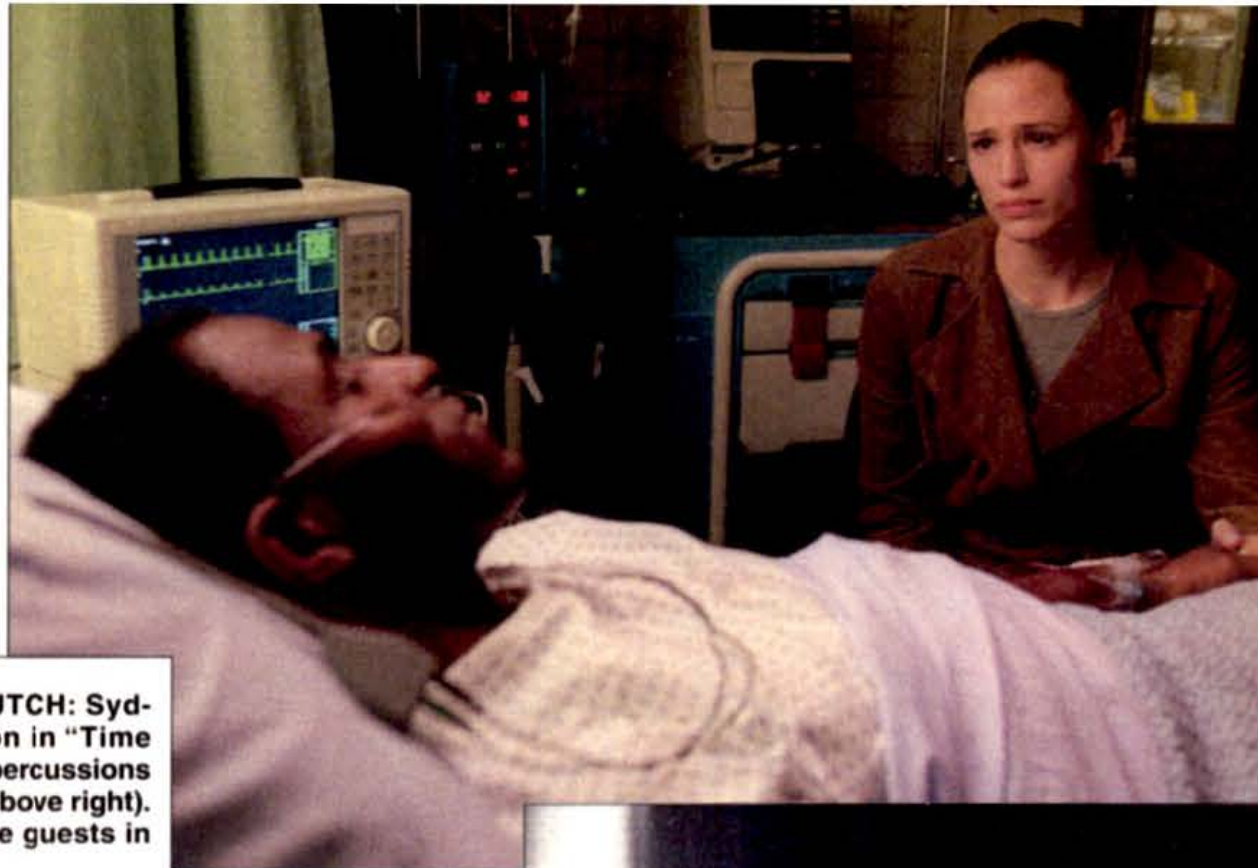
Sydney is stunned to learn that Francie and Charlie have arrived in Vegas, too, and are planning a quickie wedding.

J.J. ABRAMS: "It had some of my favorite and least favorite stuff of the year. I didn't think that the Francie and Charlie story was that successful, and I actually didn't really love the Las Vegas stuff. It bothered me that I had her leave her job to go and help Francie. 'What I loved about the episode was the last act, being in Moscow, going across between two buildings and finally meeting Sark, a very important character in our show. David Anders actually is not British in real life, which is somewhat remarkable because his accent is pretty good. And he's only 21 years old.'"

### PAGE 47

Written by J.J. Abrams & Jeff Pinkner; Directed by Ken Olin. Aired: 03/03/02.

Sydney and Dixon head to Tunisia to retrieve the Rambaldi



manuscript previously stolen by Anna Espinosa. Vaughn has given Sydney instructions to photograph the manuscript before handing it over to SD-6. Later, they discover that page 47 is blank. Sydney must use her friendship with Sloane's wife, Emily, who is dying of cancer, to get her hands on that page.

J.J. ABRAMS: "We got to introduce Amy Irving as Mrs. Sloane, and she is wonderful. The whole sequence where they're having dinner at Sloane's house is the first time we got to see Sloane in that world."

### THE PROPHECY

Written by John Eisendrath; Directed by Davis Guggenheim. Aired: 03/10/02.

While Sloane finds himself manipulated into assassinating an old friend by SD-9 leader Edward Poole (Roger Moore), Sydney finds herself incarcerated by the CIA after the agency discovers that a Rambaldi prophecy seems to suggest that she will "render the greatest power unto utter desolation."

J.J. ABRAMS: "Because we got to work with Roger Moore, it was one of the most fun episodes to me. The idea that Roger Moore would be guest starring on our show was just an impossibility."

### Q&A

Written by J.J. Abrams; Directed by Ken Olin. Aired: 03/17/02.

In flashbacks (some new, some from previous episodes), Sydney details to her captors what her life has been like. Fearful that her cover with SD-6 will soon be blown, Jack and Vaughn come up with a plan to have Sydney do something the prophecy does not foresee, thus forcing her freedom.

J.J. ABRAMS: "This was a way to say to new viewers, 'This is what our show is about.' I don't know many shows that have done a clip show after 17 episodes, but we had done so much stuff that there was lots to explain."



### MASQUERADE

Aired: 04/01/02.

Sydney begins following the trail of "The Man," who has turned out to be SD-6's main enemy. This leads her to Vienna, where she encounters former lover and SD-6 agent Noah Hicks (Peter Berg). They're given an assignment together to pursue Khasinaw, which in a long, roundabout way culminates with them in each other's embrace. At the same time, it's confirmed that Sydney's mother is indeed still alive, and the CIA is actively pursuing her because of the Rambaldi prophecy.

J.J. ABRAMS: "We felt that Sydney needed to be a little more sexual. She'd gone quite a while without any physical intimacy on the show. Her fiancé wasn't her first and last love, so the idea of introducing someone she had been with was something we thought was fun."

### SNOWMAN

Written by Jesse Alexander & Jeff Pinkner; Directed by Barnet Kellman. Aired: 04/14/02.

Sydney attempts to sort out her feelings for Noah—including the question of whether or not she can really trust him—and learns even more information about her mother's past. Word then reaches SD-6 that K-Directorate has sent an assassin out to eliminate Khasinaw, and Sydney must stop him.

J.J. ABRAMS: "It was fun for me because it was another episode where



**HIGH ROLLERS:** Sydney infiltrates Vegas in "The Coup" (above); and travels to Tunisia in search of Rambaldi manuscripts in "Page 47" (right). Below: A wild party scene from **ALMOST THIRTY YEARS**.

we got to see Sidney betrayed and her response to that.

#### THE SOLUTION

Written by John Eisendrath; Directed by Dan Attias. 04/21/02.

Sydney and Vaughn attempt to trap Khasinai, but end up dealing exclusively with Sark in an exchange of Rambaldi artifacts. Things get off to a rough start, with Sydney and Sark battling each other. Just as things seem to work out, Dixon leads an invasion of SD-6 agents onto the scene, which threatens to expose the fact that Sydney is working as a double agent.



**J.J. ABRAMS:** "Really, the last three episodes of the season were the turnaround for Will. When the Deep Throat character contacts him and says it was Jack Bristow who was involved, for me that was a huge story, because it allowed Will to suddenly go into action. Up until this point, he had been relegated to reacting. He goes to Jack, he confronts him. He's the one who wants to get to the end of this thing. I just thought that was a wonderful story for him."

"I think that the use of Sark at the end was great. And I love the fight where they're using weapons. It's one of those entertaining sequences where you didn't need to do a fight there, but I just kind of love that they go at it. Their relationship is going to become more complex next year."

#### RENDEZVOUS

Written by Erica Messer & Debra J. Fisher; Directed by Ken Olin. Aired: 05/05/02.

Enlisting the aid of Sark to capture Khasinai and pull off the retrieval of Rambaldi artifacts, Sydney goes into action. Sark betrays them, Will is taken by armed men, Dixon begins to mistrust Sydney, and Sloane, who has successfully pleaded with the Alliance to allow Emily's cancer to take her life, learns that she has gone into remission. At episode's end, Will is shot and apparently killed.

**J.J. ABRAMS:** "By far one of the best episodes of the season. I loved Will suddenly having to go to Paris and Sydney having to go as well. You kind of sensed that they were going to collide. There's almost nothing for me better this year than Will's reaction to Sydney after he watches her kick the asses of these guys."

#### ALMOST THIRTY YEARS

Written & Directed by J.J. Abrams. Aired 05/12/02.

Will awakens to find himself strapped to a chair and facing Suit and Glasses, the Chinese torturer whom Sydney had battled in the series premiere. Sydney and Vaughn move in on The Man, with everything coming down to a cliffhanger in which Vaughn is drowning, and Sydney is back in the torturer's chair, face to face with The Man: her mother!

**J.J. ABRAMS:** "Just a wild episode to do, because we had so little time to prep it. It was the only



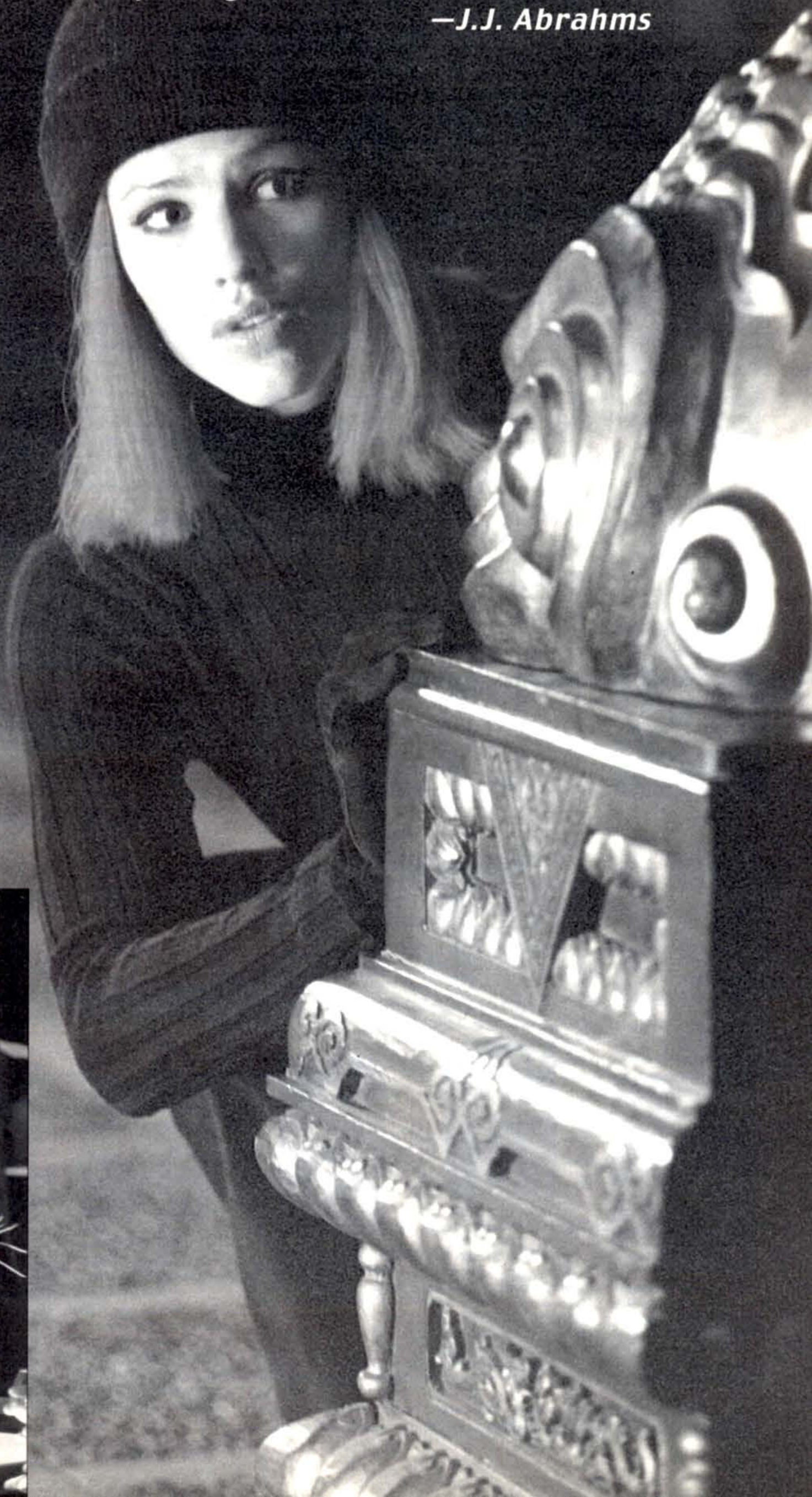
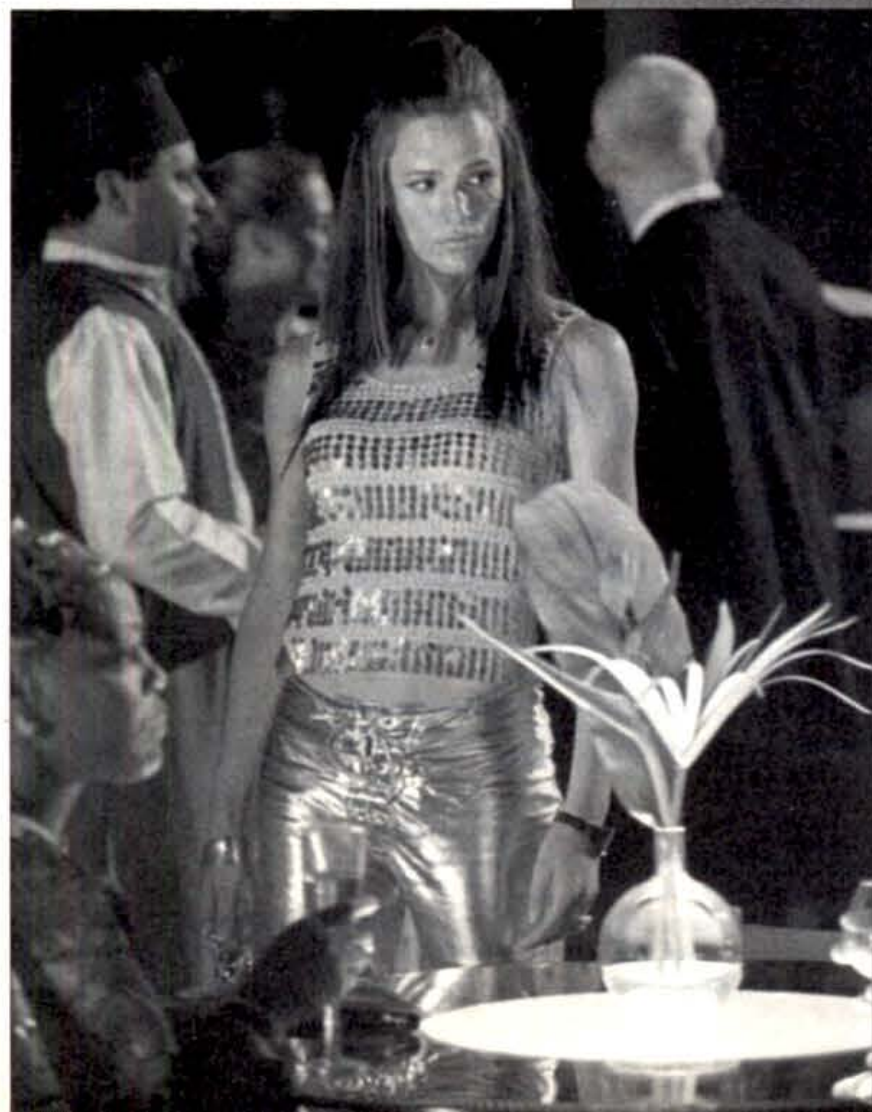


*"When the network saw the pilot, they were very excited. They loved her [Jennifer Garner] ... they felt that there was this incredible potential for this young woman to realize all sorts of adventures. I think they felt that, in a way, they had the next generation espionage action/adventure show."*

*—J.J. Abrahms*

show I'd directed since the pilot. It was really ambitious in its locations and what we needed to show visually to tell the story. "We had the enormous water sequence at the end, which was just crazy. We had one fairly small hallway at the Ink and Paint building at Disney. We shot everything in one direction. They made a miniature of that hallway and we had 800 gallons of water. Once they let that water go, the whole miniature broke. Everything collapsed. We had only one shot of the water going down the hallway. So every shot that you see is that same shot, with different parts of the shot repeated, or the whole shot was flopped over and/or blown over... That last shot of Vaughn at the window was accomplished by taking a door and putting it on top of a pool, so that Vaughn was actually underwater looking up."

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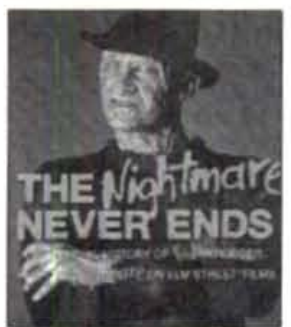
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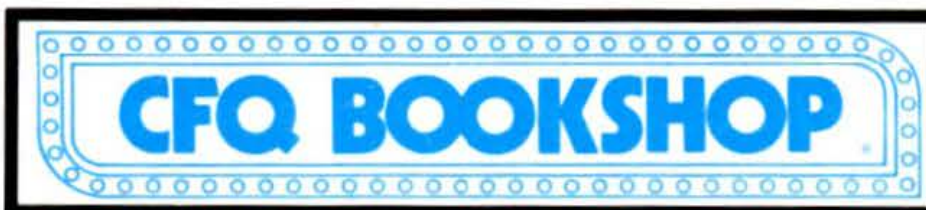
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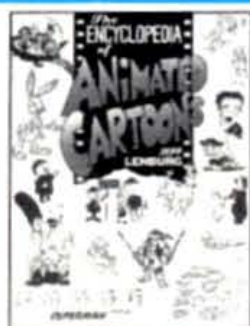
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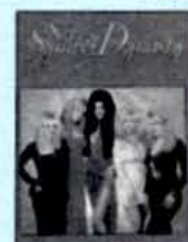
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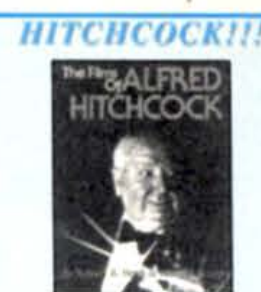
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# THE STRANGLER'S WIFE

## *You Don't Want to See What He Gets Her for Their Anniversary*

By Dan Scapperotti

Boston isn't the Mecca of film production, but Laura Wilson is working hard to change that, at least to get the city on the cinematic production map. *THE STRANGLER'S WIFE* is a first step in that direction. After being a union organizer for six years and tiring of living out of hotel rooms, Wilson decided to enroll

in the film school at the Emerson School for the Fine Arts in Boston. She quickly found that Emerson wasn't the place for the ambitious filmmaker.

"Mostly, film school was a waste of time for me," said Wilson. "I subsequently found that, for a lot of people, it's a waste of time. It's very expensive, and people come out of the traditional film school having never worked on a set or having very

little practical experience at all."

After making several short films on her own, Wilson became interested in alternate ways of training filmmakers outside of the traditional, film school curriculum. Her fantasy was to devise a way to train potential filmmakers by having them work on real projects. She became educa-

tion director for a nonprofit media arts organization called the Boston Film Video Foundation. "People would come in to work on projects that would go somewhere," she said. "I was responsible for recruiting high profile producers and directors to come to town and do master classes, and we would show some of their films."

In one brainstorming session, being a fan of Roger Corman films, Wilson decided to invite Corman to participate in a class. "Lo and behold, he agreed—

which shocked me—and he refused to accept any honorarium."

At the time, Wilson was starting her own company, Cityscape Motion Pictures. Corman, impressed with Wilson's talent and enthusiasm, offered to finance a low budget film to be produced in Boston. "We put together a contract," she said. "We didn't know what it was going to be, just that it was going to be a feature." Soon Wilson held a script competition advertised as a Roger Corman film. The results were varied, but some entries met the production parameters: They were interesting, met the Corman genre requirements, and could be produced on the skimpy budget.

The result was New Con-

**GOOD TOUCH:** Cast mostly with screen newcomers, the New Concorde production faced difficulties accommodating each actresses' standards for on-screen nudity.



corde's *THE STRANGLER'S WIFE*, the story of a serial killer preying on women in the Bay area, told from the viewpoint of his wife. Mae and Kevin, a security guard, live in a small apartment in Boston. Their relationship is based on Mae's dependency on her husband, who

Michael Allosso was brought in to both helm the project as well as fill the role of casting director. "Michael is kind of a one-man casting agency in



rescued her from an abusive situation with her father. Kevin, however, is driven to kill young women. Mae's subservient nature feeds his ego, but once she shows some independence his facade begins to crumble.

"When we think of serial killers, everyone thinks about the killer," said Wilson. "But what would happen if the serial killer had a family? Serial killers have an ordinary side to their lives like anyone else. What would happen if his wife or girlfriend found out that he was a serial killer? How would she deal with it? What would she do? What would it be like for her? That fascinated me. I had never seen that done before.

"We had a team of writing apprentices in a classroom who did the development under the leadership of a professional writer. That took a few months, and then we started principle photography on April 19, 2001. The timeline was very fast for a film. I think one of the reasons for that was that, although it was an incredibly low budget, we had our money. We never had to stop and wait until we got it again so we just pushed. We shot on 35mm."

Boston whom I've worked with for several years," said Wilson. "He's incredibly well plugged-in with both union and non-union talent in Boston. He is also an acting coach."

Surprisingly, it wasn't an actor from the director's list who snagged the lead role of Mae, but an acting student at Emerson. Sarah Huling was in her senior year at the college when a friend suggested she try out for the part. She seized the initiative and sent in her headshot.

"She came to our casting session and we were impressed with her look and demeanor," said Wilson. "She seemed to fit the part physically, kind of the wounded child that she is in the movie. She was up against a lot of women that were much more of what you would typically see in a Roger Corman movie. You know: big breasts, very bodacious. Many of them were talented, but we didn't feel that look was right for the movie."

Once the cast was in place, Wilson turned her attention to her biggest problem, locations. Two weeks before the start of production Wilson found that many of the locations still weren't set. She and others be-



**WHILE HE'S ON THE JOB:** With women in key production posts, *THE STRANGLER'S WIFE* brings a new perspective to a classic theme. Left: Sarah Huling as the wife facing down a horrible revelation.

gan paring down locations, eliminating some and combining others. "We did that first, and got it way down and then used every possible resource we could lay our hands on."

Fortunately, luck was with the production. They were able to secure an ice skating rink that was closed for the season and build their sets on the floor of the rink. "In the Boston area, productions that come to town build their sets and production offices in these skating rinks that are closed for the season. We managed to book one of those for absolutely free. We had two sets: one for the flashbacks scenes, and one for the apartment for the couple. What was nice about being in this rink was that there were bathrooms, a men's urinal area, a snack area and two offices. We were able to use that rink for seven different locations, including the set."

The inexperience of the production team wasn't without incident. Allosso and Patrick Ruth, the director of photography, butted heads several times. "They had a conflict that they worked out by the end," said Wilson. "Our director was not incredibly experienced in directing film—he was mainly a theater person. He did great with his ability to communicate with the actors, but what he didn't know too much about was how to compose shots. We

knew this. We knew that we would have to pair him up with a very experienced DP, and that the DP would be composing most of the shots."

As the strangler stalks his young female victims, there is ample opportunity for nudity. Almost none of the actresses get away without uncovering. "I think [New Concorde] would have liked more," said Wilson. "We tried to meet our quota. With Sarah and all the women who played the victims, we had to talk to each and every one of them ahead of time as to what they were willing to show. Sarah said right off the bat, 'I don't have a problem with anything. Whatever you want me to show, I'll show, as long as you don't point a camera directly between my legs.' She was totally open to that.

"The victims were another story. The majority of them were students at the Boston Conservatory of Music. Our director and casting director had worked there, so he knew these women. They're all aspiring actresses in their early twenties, with no film experience and very little professional experience. I had long conversations with each and every one of them, either in person or on the phone, asking them to tell me what their boundaries were. I told them that I'd consider their concerns, and if that works for us with the script, fine, if not, we'll have to find someone else. Laboriously we went through each, and each has a different contract: 'I'll show my left breast, but not my right'. I'm exaggerating, but it was very specific."

GFG

# THE DEAD ZONE

## *There's No Doubt, King's Got Clout: Making the Hit Cable Series*

By Frank Garcia

Imagine if you were in a terrible car accident and fell into a coma. Imagine you lay on a hospital bed and, suddenly, awakened to learn that six years had passed. Now imagine that, as a consequence of your accident, whenever you touched someone, you're gripped with shocking, surreal visions of the past, present, or future of the person in your grasp.

THE DEAD ZONE is the new series on USA Networks that explores how young high school teacher Johnny Smith manages his psychic powers. Based on the novel by Stephen King, THE DEAD ZONE stars Anthony Michael Hall as "Johnny Smith," Nicole DeBoer (PROM NIGHT IV) as his former fiancée, Sarah Bracknell, Chris Bruno as Sarah's husband, Sheriff Walt Bannerman, J.L. Adams as Johnny's physiotherapist, Bruce, and David Ogden-Stiers as Reverend Gene Purdy. The creative trio responsible for bringing the show to television are STAR TREK THE NEXT GENERA-

TION's Michael Piller, his son Shawn Piller, and Lloyd Segan.

THE DEAD ZONE, said producer Shawn Piller, isn't just a cheap attempt at shocks and thrills for television. The series is about "stories that deal with the human condition. It's really dealing with moral and ethical dilemmas, choices that everyone can relate to. Those stories are difficult to tackle on traditional television.

"The story has a Stephen King strangeness to it," said executive producer and director Robert Lieberman, who filmed the 1993 feature FIRE IN THE SKY. "That's the sensational aspect to it. The other side of it is about a man who's lost six years of his life. There's a threefold

template that I've used to create these shows: Every episode should have something that's frightening, something that's funny, and something that's warm and emotional. That's the definition of THE DEAD ZONE for me."

For Anthony Michael Hall, playing Johnny Smith was such an alluring opportunity that he spent considerable time developing his character, exploring the physical, mental and spiritual aspects of the man. "It's physical, in that I have to find the body of the character," said Hall, who starred in the 1985 genre comedy WEIRD SCIENCE. "I had to figure out how to walk as the character. I had to use my body as the

psychic. It's very key, because of how energy moves through the body.

"The second thing is mental, because I have to figure out how to think like the character, come up with a game that I can use in my performance and in what I want to accomplish. Is it a blessing or a curse that he has these abilities? I would say both. Psychics would probably attest to that as well.

"It's physically draining. I have two friends who actually are psychics. One of them, she performs on talk shows, does readings of people live on the air, and does private readings. She told me it's very draining on her body."

**REAL LIFE AFTER DEATH:** Star Anthony Michael Hall drew upon the experiences of a psychic friend to develop the haunted protagonist of THE DEAD ZONE.



Finally, Hall considered the spiritual aspects of the character: "I want to connect with the actors and the crew that I am working with. And, ultimately, the audience as well!" To present the stunning "Dead Zone visions" on the screen, director Rob Lieberman developed some cost-effective techniques. For an important moment in the pilot in which Johnny

"flashed" back to the end of the Vietnam War and witnessed, as a participant, how his doctor became separated from his mother. Lieberman decided the trick to the moment resided in processes no CG program could provide. "I decided to shoot it like a feature, so it didn't look like television."

Hundreds of Vietnamese extras were recruited, and were placed in a re-creation of a Vietnamese city street. The extras ran and stumbled over each other in fear, fleeing from soldiers and gunfire. For the moment where the script called for the action to stop so that Johnny could walk through the scene and observe the carnage, Lieberman's technique was simple: "I just called out 'Freeze!' and they just held still. They stood still, and [in post-production,] we painted in

thing. It's very effective."

Piller insisted that, by adapting THE DEAD ZONE for television instead of a feature, it is now possible for more of Stephen King's plots and characters to be employed. "We can tell pieces of the book over five or seven years. We can really do the book justice. That's the place we start from. Whenever we



**KING COMMANDS: THE DEAD ZONE** acknowledges the original novel (above) while striking off in its own direction. **LEFT:** The cast, from left to right: J.L. Adams, Anthony Michael Hall, Nicole DeBoer, and Chris Bruno.

utilizes these facts to navigate through the imminent future," explained Hall. "Navigating, while at the same time acting as the detective on-the-scene, trying to defuse it." "It's very hand-held documentary, very raw," said Lieberman.

"It goes from one vision to the next, trying to avert a disaster."

Continued Hall. "We're drawing heavily from some films. We did a show called 'Unreasonable Doubt' that was an homage to 12 ANGRY MEN: a courtroom show about the jury deliberating. Johnny became the Henry Fonda role. It turned out wonderfully.

"It's been very diverse. It's almost like we're doing a big movie every week, as opposed to episodic television."

Shawn Piller's favorite

episode was "Enigma," a love story taking place in 1945, prior to the end of World War II. "It's like QUANTUM LEAP," said

the producer. "Johnny gets to become different characters. Although he can't change their past, he can experience things through their eyes.... It's basically a musical—there's lots of dancing—and a love story about a girl who gets seduced by a friend and ultimately makes the right decision."

Summing up his feelings about THE DEAD ZONE, Hall said, "This is something that I think has breakthrough potential. It takes the audience on a wild trip every week. They're basically inside my head—I'm not just walking through it."

"I think it has the real ability to become a classic television show," Shawn Piller concluded. "I think we have the ability to cross over genres, and bring in an audience of not only science fiction fans and Stephen King fans, but also fans of good drama. That would be my dream."

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things floating in the air. They were able to do quite an amazing job of remaining motionless without blinking for quite a while."

Said Hall, "We have these elaborate steadicam moves that lead to me doing a single-action or freezing, and the camera moves out or in to an isolated action. Then we'll pull a freeze, and what happens is we'll speed it up in post-production, so it grabs really quickly. It's like fast-moving in from ten feet away into my face, or some-

have a question of the direction to go, we can refer back to the book and see what King did."

A pair of episodes provided insightful glimpses into Johnny's psychic encounters. In "Siege," an episode Hall referred to as being reminiscent of the 1975 Al Pacino thriller DOG DAY AFTERNOON, Johnny and Sarah found themselves as the unwitting hostages in a bank robbery. Throughout the episode Johnny's psychic powers go on overload. "He sees the potential outcomes and



# SPIDER-MAN VS. STAR WARS

Why the Sticky Fingered Superhero Comes Closer To Matching Cinema's First Science-Fantasy Classic Than Lucas' Own Follow-Up.

By Dennis Kleinman

Every so often, a new vision comes along to transform the world. Eduard Manet had one when he thumbed his nose at elitist critics and painted men in contemporary dress having a picnic with a very naked lady. Richard Wagner had one when he composed his first "music-drama," sweeping away in one mighty stroke the stale operatic conventions of the mid-19th century. And let us not forget Stan Lee. Yes, Stan Lee, the comic book guy.

Back when I was a freckled-faced lad ("acne-faced" was probably more like it, but what's the fun of being a writer if you can't give history an occasional tweak?), comics were plentiful and universally consumed. It was what is now called "The Silver Age of Comics," and without question the dominant producer was DC. But the DC line-up—including such well-muscled stalwarts as Superman, Batman, Wonder Woman, and my personal favorite, Green Lantern—could be as bland as an episode of *OZZIE & HARRIET*...the superheroes super-nice-guys, the villains grotesque, deformed, and drawn in a variety of strange colors. It was time for a revolution.

Enter Stan Lee with a new, and decidedly less square, generation of superheroes—The Fantastic Four, The Hulk, X-Men, and, of course, Spiderman. These comics didn't take place in some mythical place like Metropolis or Gotham City. Nosirree. Marvel stories took place in New York City, urban warts and all. And Lee gave his heroes real emotions, flaws, and backstories that were

often deeply tragic. What had been paper-thin constructs suddenly became fully-dimensional characters who burst off the page—out of the frame—to confront equally human and flawed super-villains like the Green Goblin, Dr. Doom and Magneto.

No character embodied this brave new comic book vision better than **SPIDER-MAN**, whose tale of growing up super-gifted has just been brought to the screen by another pulp visionary, Sam Raimi. Like the character it is based on, **SPIDER-MAN** is daring, complex, and flawed, though not tragically so. While it let me down periodically, the over-all ride was exhilarating.

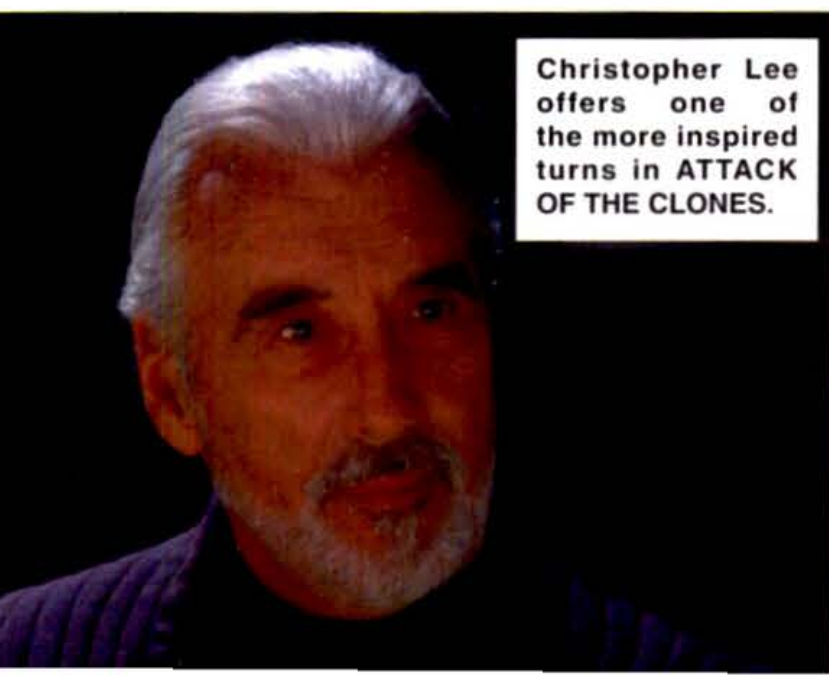
We first meet high school nerd Peter Parker (Toby McGuire) and the love of his life, class hottie Mary Jane (Kirsten Dunst), as they are visiting a laboratory in NYC that specializes in genetically mutated spiders. Peter is bitten by one of the little buggers, and overnight is transformed into a class nerd with super powers. He soon learns, under tragic circumstances, that with these powers comes great responsibility, setting in motion a love vs. duty conflict, the kind of dilemma that has fueled story-making machinery for hundreds of generations. Both Peter and MJ end up in New York City, where Peter begins his crime-fighting career in earnest. Unfortunately, Norman Osborne, a brilliant scientist and father of Parker's best friend, Harry, uses himself as guinea pig, and ends up devolved into the Green Goblin, a jet-propelled psychopath who wreaks super-havoc throughout the city.

Raimi intrinsically understands the elements that made Stan Lee's vision unique. He carefully balances the story, flipping between the big-action face-off of Spiderman and the Green Goblin, and the small interpersonal face-off between Peter Parker, Harry Osborne, and Mary Jane, sometimes allowing the two stories to overlap in unexpected ways. Unlike every other comic book-to-big screen adaptation, Raimi allows the intimate scenes between Peter and MJ to play out naturally, feeling no need whatsoever to rush on to the next spectacular action sequence. Those action sequences, by the way, *are* truly spectacular. Anyone who is a fan of the comics knows that Spiderman has a way of moving

through the air that is totally his own. Raimi has captured these airborne arabesques so effectively that one cannot help but get a giddy high off of them. The fight sequences are also imaginatively conceived, especially one scene where Spidey and Gobby duke it out in a burning building. Only a virtuoso stylist like Raimi would dream up, let alone attempt, something this dazzling.

Raimi has done a boffo job in casting his leads. Toby McGuire is a perfect fit as Peter Parker, your standard issue beta-teen, responding to

each new challenge with a mix of confusion and desperate determination. Kirsten Dunst as the goddess-next-door has little to do but feel wistfully drawn to Peter's soulfulness even as she's cruising off to party 'til dawn with the muscle-bound no-necks who are a high-school's natural predators. Luckily, Ms. Dunst has the ability to make you care, revealing hints of vulnerability beneath the party-girl mask that can be heartbreaking. And who could possibly make a better Goblin than Willem Dafoe? With those bulging eyes, too-tight skin, and unmistakably wicked smile, the man seems genetically engineered for villainous roles. Unfortunately, much of the time, that naturally evil physiognomy is covered by a thick plastic mask like the ones used on **POWER RANGERS**. Just as unfortunately, the effect is the same: You hear the villainous voice,



Christopher Lee offers one of the more inspired turns in **ATTACK OF THE CLONES**.

but with no expression to back it up there is a disconnect during extended dialogue scenes.

Even with all of these fine actors on set, the standout performance is by J.K. Simmons as J.J. Jameson, the blustering, self-serving editor of the *Daily Bugle*. Simmons delivers every line as if it were a full-page headline, creating an incisive, wildly entertaining portrait of a manic, brilliant bottom-feeder who is equally good at manipulating all those in his service and the public-at-large. In some ways, though, this juggernaut of a performance, which comprises all of two scenes, does the whole enterprise a disservice by demonstrating what the rest of the movie lacks: electricity. Oh, there's plenty of spirited action, but the interaction between the characters lacks the spark that could have lifted the movie into the stratosphere. I especially refer here to James Franco, whose black hole performance as Harry Osborne is Raimi's one big miscalculation. Hopefully, like Peter Parker, Franco will redeem himself in one of the inevitable sequels.

Whatever happened to STAR WARS? Silly question, I guess. Ask anyone, even in places "far, far away," and they'll tell you that the latest installment, **STAR WARS EPISODE II: ATTACK OF THE CLONES**, is available for consumption at your locale multiplex. You will definitely get your money's worth—dazzling CGI creatures by the transport-load, spectacular new worlds, each more otherworldly than the last.

This is big entertainment, twenty-first century style: imaginative; kinetic; experiential. Every other moment, you are freefalling through space, shooting through an asteroid belt, or staring into the maw of a delightfully hideous creature with more teeth than Bruce the Shark and Julia Roberts combined. But to get back to my original question, whatever it is up there on that screen, it is quite a different animal than the one that pummeled the American imagination into submission a few decades back. True, they still have much in common. The original three STAR WARS movies practically invented the theme-park-ride style of experiential filmmaking back in the '70s. They also had big, imposing scores by John Williams. And they featured the best fx available at the time, igniting, the digital revolution that transformed, and is still transforming, what we are willing to pay admission for. But for me at least, the similarities seem to end there.

In tone, content and spirit, **ATTACK OF THE CLONES**, like its predecessor, **THE PHANTOM MENACE**, is pretty turgid stuff, galaxies from the comic book panache exhibited in the original trilogy. Of course, the tragic circumstances that transform the sincere, devoted Anakin Skywalker into the villainous, power-worshipping Darth Vader do not lend themselves to the

same exuberant, fleet-footed storytelling that chronicled Luke Skywalker's rise from callow youth to interstellar hero. At the same time, there is a certain joylessness to the proceedings that weighs on the characters from the very start, especially Anikan (Hayden Christenson), whose method of showing his character's inner suffering is limited to furrowing his brow—the deeper the suffering, the deeper the furrow. Christenson's flat, uninteresting performance at the center of the film is its major flaw, creating an even bigger black hole in **CLONES** than James Franco's in **SPIDER-MAN**.

The rest of the performances are far more engaging. Ewan McGregor works hard to elevate some trite dialogue, and for the most part succeeds. What he does best, however, is make us believe he is the young Obi-Wan—there are moments when I could swear he was channeling Alec Guinness from the beyond the grave. Natalie Portman, who plays Amidala, gives an accessible, nuanced performance, especially considering the emotional gymnastics her character must go through to fulfill her function in Lucas' grand design (and endure the eighty or so costume changes George lays out for her). Special kudos to Christopher Lee for his bemused, Machiavelian Senator Dooku. Nice to see the old bloodsucker sinking his fangs into tasty roles like Saruman in **LOTR**, and this one.

By far, the standout performance is that adorable little font of wisdom, Yoda (Frank Oz), the only non-cybernetic character who survives pretty much intact from the original trilogy. In fact, the scene where Yoda kicks ass in **CLONES** is the one creating all the buzz. Not surprisingly, it is also the scene that is most similar in sensibility to the original trilogy, drawing at least part of its kick from the reconfiguring of old movie clichés, something the original series did relentlessly, and which the new series seems to have for the most part abandoned. In that moment, one senses the same strand of buoyancy and lightheartedness that kept the original trilogy from slipping too much into darkness. There is nothing wrong with having a serious agenda. Lucas' exploration of Anakin's descent, plus the troubling issue of a squabbling democracy's impotence against an internal fascist threat, is

ambitious and admirable. The balance between light and dark Lucas achieved so effortlessly in the original **STAR WARS** now seems labored and unconvincing. As Yoda might put it, "The Dark Side for each of us danger represents. Filmmakers also."

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A younger Yoda (top) is one of the few characters to remain true to his origins (inset, with Alec Guinness and Sebastian Shaw).



George Lucas today (top) and in 1976 (inset) is in familiar territory, but the tone, content and spirit have been lost between the decades.



Ewan McGregor (top), as the younger Obi-Wan, seems to have channeled Alec Guinness (inset) from beyond the grave.



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The making of THE BLACK HOLE, including interviews with more than 20 Disney actors, artists, engineers and technicians, plus abandoned pre-production concepts by noted space artist Robert McCall; biography of Peter Ellenshaw, production designer. Review of STAR TREK-TMP plus a best of decade recap. **\$15.00**

**VOL 10 NO 1**  
In-depth interview with John Carpenter, discussing his career from filming DARK STAR as a student at U.S.C. to the success of HALLOWEEN and THE FOG, plus a look at Carpenter's teen-age career as a publisher of horror fanzines and amateur filmmaker; revealing photo preview of newcomer D.D. Winters in TANYA'S ISLAND; critical analysis of miniseries adaptation of THE MARTIAN CHRONICLES. **\$6.00**

**VOL 10 NO 3**  
Ray Harryhausen, Charles H. Schneer, and screenwriter Beverly Cross on CLASH OF THE TITANS: storyboards, behind-the-scenes shots, animation tests, color composites, and a rare photo; Rick Baker, William Finley, Kevin Conway and Mort Rabinowitz on Tobe Hooper's FUNHOUSE; Joe Dante's THE HOWLING and the boom in werewolf films. **\$6.00**

**VOL 10 NO 4**  
A look at audacious young director, David Cronenberg, the low-budget shockers that made him famous and his latest project, SCANNERS; director Jeannot Szwarc on romantic fantasy in SOMEWHERE IN TIME; Robert and Richard Greenburg on creating a "new look" in movie promotions and title sequences for ALIEN and SUPERMAN; CONAN preview; Stephen King update. **\$6.00**

**VOL 11 NO 1**  
The amazing 35-year career of Dick Smith, creator of makeup effects for THE EXORCIST and ALTERED STATES; Rob Bottin's transformation makeup for THE HOWLING; Rick Baker and John Sayles on E.T., a CE3K semi-sequel; Peter Hyams on OUTLAND; future projects by Jack Arnold. **\$8.00**



**Bruce Campbell (23:1)**

**VOL 11 NO 3**  
An exclusive report on CONAN THE BARBARIAN, 16 in-depth interviews including director John Milius, production designer Rob Cobb, Arnold Schwarzenegger and James Earl Jones; preview of Rick Baker's makeup for AMERICAN WEREWOLF IN LONDON; the filming of WOLFEN; HEARTBEEPS preproduction; why the HOWLING's makeup effects came together at the veritable last minute. **\$6.00**

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Ray Harryhausen retrospective, the definitive story of his life and work beginning with his childhood and earliest experiments with filmmaking through the release of SEVENTH VOYAGE OF SINBAD crammed with rare photos and exclusive inside information; the WORKS; computer animation's next step; behind the scenes at SWAMP THING; a look at the remake of the Jacques Tourneur's classic CAT PEOPLE. **\$8.00**

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The filming of GHOST STORY, including interviews with director John Irvin, screenwriter Lawrence Cohen and visual effects supervisor Albert Whitlock. Makeup artist Dick Smith unveils his series of ghastly apparitions; profile of GHOST STORY author Peter Straub; also THE HAUNTING OF JULIA, and a behind-the-scenes look at the sophisticated robots of HEARTBEEPS. **\$6.00**

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Incredible CONAN THE BARBARIAN double issue, 50 pages devoted to one of the most ambitious Sword & Sorcery epics of all time, with hundreds of photos and behind-the-scenes information, including interviews with director John Milius, and production designer Ron Cobb; on-set report for VIDEO DROME; preproduction of CREEPSHOW; William Munn on creating the makeup for SWAMP THING. **\$20.00**

**VOL 12 NO 4**  
Making of CAT PEOPLE, director Paul Schrader's remake of the classic horror film, including interviews with the director, screenwriter Alan Ormsby, makeup artists Tom and Ellis Burman, cat trainer Ron Oxley and others; a retro on Jacques Tourneur's original CAT PEOPLE; a straight talk with Nicholas Meyer on directing STAR TREK II; preproduction of Disney's TRON, THE ELECTRIC GRANDMOTHER, and John Carpenter's THE THING. **\$8.00**

**VOL 12 NO 5/6**  
Issue-length stories on the making of both STAR TREK II: THE WRATH OF KHAN and an in-depth look at BLADE RUNNER's dazzling design and effects work, including interviews with Ridley Scott, Lawrence G. Paull and others. Exhaustive coverage of STAR TREK II including the brilliant effects work of ILM. **\$12.00**

**STAR TREK cover \$12.00**  
**BLADE RUNNER cover \$30.00**

**VOL 13 NO 1**  
The making of CREEPSHOW, including interviews with the three scariest men in Hollywood: author Stephen King, director George Romero and makeup artist Tom Savini; a preview of SLAPSTICK, Steven Paul's \$4 million adaptation of Kurt Vonnegut's best-seller; exposing the secrets of introvision; a talk with makeup artists Craig Reardon and Robert Short on their unheralded work on E.T. **\$6.00**

**VOL 13 NO 2/3**  
Four issue-length stories in one! Exclusive coverage of Rob Bottin's makeup effects for THE THING, illustrated with never-before-seen storyboards and diagrams; the making of Steven Spielberg's E.T., including interviews with the alien's creator Carlo Rambaldi, ILM effects supervisor Dennis Muren and "little person" Pat Bilon; preview of Peter Yates's work on KRULL; filming the special effects of Steven Spielberg and Tobe Hooper's POLTERGEIST, including interviews with makeup artist Craig Reardon and physical effects supervisors Mike Wood and Steve Jarvis. **\$12.00**

**THE THING cover \$12.00**  
**THE KRULL cover \$12.00**

**VOL 13 NO 4**  
Complete story behind THE DARK CRYSTAL, featuring rare interview with Jim Henson and a review of his career! Also, THE HUNGER, RETURN TO OZ, plus interviews with make up artist Dick Smith, stop-motion animator David Allen and novelist Whitley Strieber. Also, review of David Cronenberg's VIDEO DROME and Rick Baker's FX. **\$6.00**

**VOL 13 NO 6/VOL 14 NO 1**  
Double issue features the 3-D explosion of 1983. Effects coverage of SPACEHUNTER, JAWS 3-D, and METALSTORM; a detailed analysis of 3-D's history and future. Plus a preview of CHRISTINE and a look at Don Bluth's DRAGON'S LAIR. **\$12.00**

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**VOL 14 NO 2**  
The films of David Cronenberg. Behind-the-scenes coverage of THE DEAD ZONE, including interviews with Cronenberg, actor Martin Sheen, cinematographer Mark Irwin and production designer Carol Spier. Also, filming of VIDEO DROME, including interview with makeup whiz Rick Baker; filming the special effects for Douglas Trumbull's BRAINSTORM; effects for THE RIGHT STUFF; Don Bluth's SPACE ACE. **\$6.00**

**VOL 14 NO 3**  
In-depth retrospective of Walt Disney and Jules Verne's classic, 20,000 LEAGUES UNDER THE SEA, featuring interviews with the film's director, Richard Fleischer; and its stars, Kirk Douglas, James Mason and Peter Lorre; filming CHRISTINE, including talks with Stephen King, mechanical effects expert Roy Arbogast and many others; on-the-set preview of Mark Lester's FIRESTARTER; critical analysis of post-apocalyptic films, including THE DAY AFTER. **\$6.00**

**VOL 14 NO 4/5**  
Mammoth production article on the filming DUNE, plus a retrospect of David Lynch's ERASERHEAD, STAR TREK III, CONAN THE DESTROYER, FIRESTARTER, THE PHILADELPHIA EXPERIMENT, SCREAM FOR HELP/RETURN TO OZ, STREETS OF FIRE, SPLASH, CHILDREN OF THE CORN, and FRIDAY THE 13TH-PART IV. **\$12.00**

**VOL 15 NO 1**  
A look at computer animation's more formative period, this issue features THE LAST STARFIGHTER. This groundbreaking film used computer-generated images rather than the more industry-standard modeling techniques, paving the way for today's ubiquitous and dazzling CGI sequences. **\$6.00**

# VOL 15 NO 2

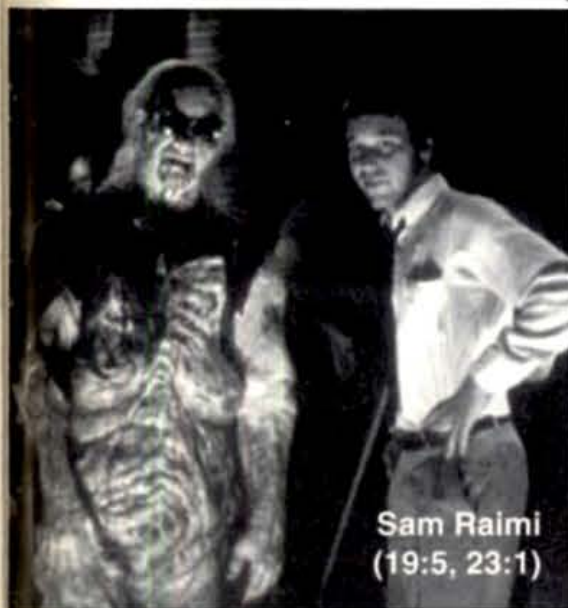
Animation rotoscoping is the process pioneered by Peter Kuran, a one-time STAR WARS apprentice now with his own company which has honed the process to the keen visual effects featured in DREAMSCAPE. Also featured in this issue is the production of Tim Burton's short feature FRANKENWEENIE which pays homage to James Whale's film but this time the title character is canine **\$6.00**

# VOL 15 NO 3

The story behind Tobe Hooper's LIFE FORCE, his first film since directing POLTERGEIST for Steven Spielberg; the filming of RETURN TO OZ, including the dazzling claymation effects produced by Will Vinton; plus an examination of two low-budget genre pictures that turned out to be 1984's big sleepers—Wes Craven's NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET and James Cameron's THE TERMINATOR, with conversations with both of these versatile directors. **\$6.00**

# VOL 15 NO 4

Behind-the-scenes with the summer of '85s off-beat zombie hit RETURN OF THE LIVING DEAD, an unofficial sequel to George Romero's famed cult classics. Also featured is an insightful retrospect on the zombie film through the ages plus coverage of FRIGHT NIGHT and CLAN OF THE CAVE BEAR. **\$6.00**



Sam Raimi  
(19:5, 23:1)

# VOL 15 NO 5

Director Ridley Scott (BLADE RUNNER, ALIEN) teams up with makeup master Rob Bottin (THE THING) to present LEGEND, what our reviewer terms "the most exquisite fantasy ever filmed..." Scott's fantasy extraordinaire features some familiar faces with RISKY BUSINESS's Tom Cruise and ROCKY HORROR's Tim Curry. Also included in this spectacular issue is Wolfgang (THE NEVER-ENDING STORY) Petersen's science fiction epic/racial parable, ENE-MY MINE. **\$6.00**

# VOL 16 NO 2

HIGHLANDER is the centerpiece of this stellar issue. Coverage of this epic includes interviews with Mulcahy, Sean Connery, Christopher Lambert and makeup artist Bob Keene. **\$6.00**

# VOL 17 NO 1

Detailing of the LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS phenomenon—from Roger Corman's '60s B-film to Frank Oz's big-budget blockbuster. Interviews with Corman, writer Charles B. Griffith, Howard Ashman, the horror film fan who molded the off-Broadway hit, actress Ellen Greene and effects wizard Lyle Conway. **\$6.00**

# VOL 17 NO 2

A fond 20th Anniversary salute to the original STAR TREK TV series. Stories on Roddenberry, composer Alexander Courage, and the makeup wizard who created the ears for Spock and a pantheon of other ETs. Also features interviews with the cast and crew, discussing the series in light of the sequels that followed. **\$6.00**

# VOL 17 NO 5

A step-by-step chronology of Lyle Conway's amazing creation of Audrey II for Frank Oz's LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS, along with a career profile of Conway since childhood. Director Frank Oz speaks on the difficulties of combining the elements of fantasy, musicals and effects and on his controversial decision to exchange the film's downbeat ending to a "happily ever after" one. **\$6.00**

# VOL 18 NO 1

From the makeup of Rob Bottin to the effects work of Phil Tippett, this issue takes a look at the making of ROBOCOP. Included are interviews with director Paul Verhoeven, producer Jon Davison and others. Also the effect of the literary field of "cyberpunk" on the look of science fiction movies is examined. **\$6.00**

# VOL 18 NO 2/3

Special double issue spotlights the MOVIE POSTER ARTISTS OF THE '50s and their remarkable work in creating looks that were often better than the films they advertised. Over 60 colorful pages of art and profiles and interviews with the artists themselves. Also featured is Italian auteur Dario Argento's OPERA. **\$12.00**

# VOL 18 NO 4

Swiss surrealist H.R. Giger is the subject of this issue which profiles his film work since ALIEN and also takes a look at all the Giger rip-offs that have come down the pike. The artist is interviewed in his studio/home in Switzerland and speaks frankly about his past experiences and optimistically about his latest film work—THE MIRROR. Also FRIDAY THE 13TH—PART VII. **\$6.00**

# VOL 18 NO 5

The making of PHANTASM II and a look back at the original film which foreshadowed the success of Wes Craven's A NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET. Wes speaks out on why he bid goodbye to the popular ELM STREET series in the wake of a third sequel. Also ROBOJOX, BEETLE-JUICE, FRIDAY THE 13TH—PART VII, OUTER HEAT and CHILD'S PLAY are covered. **\$6.00**

# VOL 19 NO 3

This popular issue featuring STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION provides an in-depth critical overview of the first year. Also includes a behind-the-scenes look at the creative power structure that evolved during the show's first season and the reasons behind the somewhat large turnover in talent. **\$6.00**

# VOL 19 NO 4

Terry Gilliam's fantasy epic, THE ADVENTURES OF BARON MUNCHAUSEN is featured in depth. Behind-the-scenes coverage highlights interviews with Gilliam and other principals, who describe the rocky road to the film's completion and explain how the budget sky-rocketed to a whopping \$45 million. **\$6.00**

# VOL 19 NO 5

The James Bond adventure LICENCE TO KILL is the cover story of this dynamic issue. Timothy Dalton is the new leading man, flanked by Bond girl Carey Lowell. Their breathtaking adventures are chronicled in this behind-the-scenes profile. Also a dazzling Bond retrospective, and EARTH GIRLS ARE EASY, starring Geena Davis, Jim Carey, and Julie Brown. **\$6.00**

# VOL 20 NO 3

TALES FROM THE CRYPT—HBO's series based on the EC horror comics of the early '50s is featured. Included are interviews with the series' big-name directors and coverage of the special effects needed to turn comics into television. Other stories cover THE ABYSS, EARTH GIRLS ARE EASY, and BEAUTY AND THE BEAST. **\$6.00**

# VOL 20 NO 4

Margaret Atwood's chilling, cautionary novel The Handmaid's Tale came to the screen with Natasha Richardson, Robert Duvall and Faye Dunaway, directed by Volker Schlöndorff. This issue features interviews with Atwood, Schlöndorff, Richardson and crew. Also THE HUNT FOR RED OCTOBER and ROBOCOP 2. **\$6.00**

# VOL 20 NO 5

Paul Blaisdell, Hollywood's forgotten monster-maker. He worked for independent '50s producers using his ingenuity and imagination to create bug-eyed aliens and the famous She-Creature, some of the best-known movie monsters ever conceived. Low-budget special effects at their best. **\$6.00**

# VOL 21 NO 1

From the Houston-based set of ROBOCOP 2, our writer provides an in-depth look at the often rocky road to bringing to the screen the sequel to Verhoeven's science fiction hit. Also reclusive actor/producer/director Warren Beatty's talented crew of actors and filmic craftsmen on the making of DICK TRACY. **\$6.00**

DICK TRACY cover \$6.00  
ROBOCOP 2 cover \$6.00

# VOL 21 NO 4

Stephen King—all-time horror master—and MISERY, the Academy Award-winning movie based on his book. In a far-reaching assessment of King movie projects Gary Wood reviews the hits and misses of Hollywood's attempts at filming King's books, including PET SEMATARY, THE DARK HALF, and more. **\$6.00**

PET SEMATARY cover \$6.00  
MISERY cover \$10.00

# VOL 21 NO 5

This issue is devoted to Arnold Schwarzenegger's forays into the science fiction genre, including coverage of Paul Verhoeven's TOTAL RECALL and the hell of filming Mars down in Mexico, plus a look at the robot that can't be stopped, with James Cameron directing TERMINATOR 2, the sequel to his 1984 hit. **\$6.00**

# VOL 22 NO 2

A look back at the fourth season of STAR TREK: NEXT GENERATION. Contains an informative guide to the fourth season's episodes. Plus a look at the merits of James Cameron's mega-hit TERMINATOR 2 and Tim Burton's views on BATMAN RETURNS. **\$6.00**

# VOL 24 NO 2

Exhaustive coverage of JURASSIC PARK, plus ILM's groundbreaking computer graphics. Other prehistoric movies like CARNOSAUR, PREHYSTERIA, plus a look at ROBOCOP 3 and THE ABYSS. **\$6.00**

JURASSIC cover \$6.00  
ROBOCOP 3 cover \$8.00

# VOL 24 NO 6/VOL 25 NO 1

Our commemorative look at the comic book phenomenon of the mythic hero's incarnation in films and on television. Also included is an episode guide that marks the highlights of the 120 half-hour Adam West shows; Also behind-the-scenes of BATMAN: MASK OF THE PHANTASM. **\$12.00**

BATMAN TV cover \$12.00  
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# VOL 25 NO 2

The amazing computer graphics of BABYLON 5. Plus coverage of the filming of Stephen King's TV horror masterpiece, THE STAND and a look inside the King horror empire. Also reports on GHOST IN THE MACHINE, SKINNER, WOLF and ED WOOD. **\$6.00**

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# VOL 25 NO 3

2001 retrospect, with special effects expert Douglas Trumbull looking back on this science fiction masterpiece, the landmark visual effects and his experiences working with director Stanley Kubrick. Plus the filming of THE FLINTSTONES—from the effects of Jim Henson's Creature Shop to ILM's CGI dinosaurs. **\$6.00**

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2001RETRO cover \$8.00

# VOL 25 NO 5

Making of Tim Burton's ode to a different kind of filmmaker, the worst director of all time, Ed Wood. Plus the seventh STAR TREK movie, GENERATIONS, the arresting CGI effects used by director Peter Hyams in TIMECOP, and STARGATE, the \$55 million epic science fiction film. **\$6.00**

# VOL 26 NO 2

STAR TREK's Next Generation teams up with the Classic cast in their first theatrical release, GENERATIONS. Robert H. Justman remembers Gene Roddenberry; STAR TREK: VOYAGER continues as Kate Mulgrew steps in as the new Starfleet captain. Plus, an interview with Chris Carter, X-FILES director. **\$6.00**

# VOL 26 NO 4

Story of Charles Band, founder of Full Moon, including coverage of CASTLE FREAK and JOSH KIRBY: TIME WARRIOR. Also, Director Joel Schumaker on making BATMAN FOREVER, and a look at CONGO, MORTAL KOMBAT: THE MOVIE, JUDGE DREDD and CASPER. **\$6.00**

# VOL 26 NO 5

London correspondent Alan Jones provides this issue's cover story on JUDGE DREDD, Danny Cannon's \$80 million future-world based on the British comic book icon. Plus, excellent in-depth coverage of WATERWORLD, POCAHONTAS, WHITE DWARF and Stephen King's THE LONGOLIER. **\$6.00**

# VOL 26 NO 6 / VOL 27 NO 1

In our special X-FILES double issue, Paula Vitaris provides a detailed episode guide to the popular TV show's first two seasons, interviews with the series' creator Chris Carter and his staff, and a behind-the-scenes look at nearly every facet of production. Also LORD OF ILLUSIONS. **\$12.00**

# VOL 27 NO 3

This issue features Pierce Brosnan as the new James Bond in GOLDENEYE plus behind-the-scenes interviews with the cast and crew who helped to make the 007 hit. Also read about DRAGONHEART, CITY OF LOST CHILDREN, THE SECRET OF ROAN ISH and preproduction on TWELVE MONKEYS. **\$6.00**

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# CFQ Reviews

## FILM RATINGS

- Must see
- Excellent
- Good
- Mediocre
- Read a Book

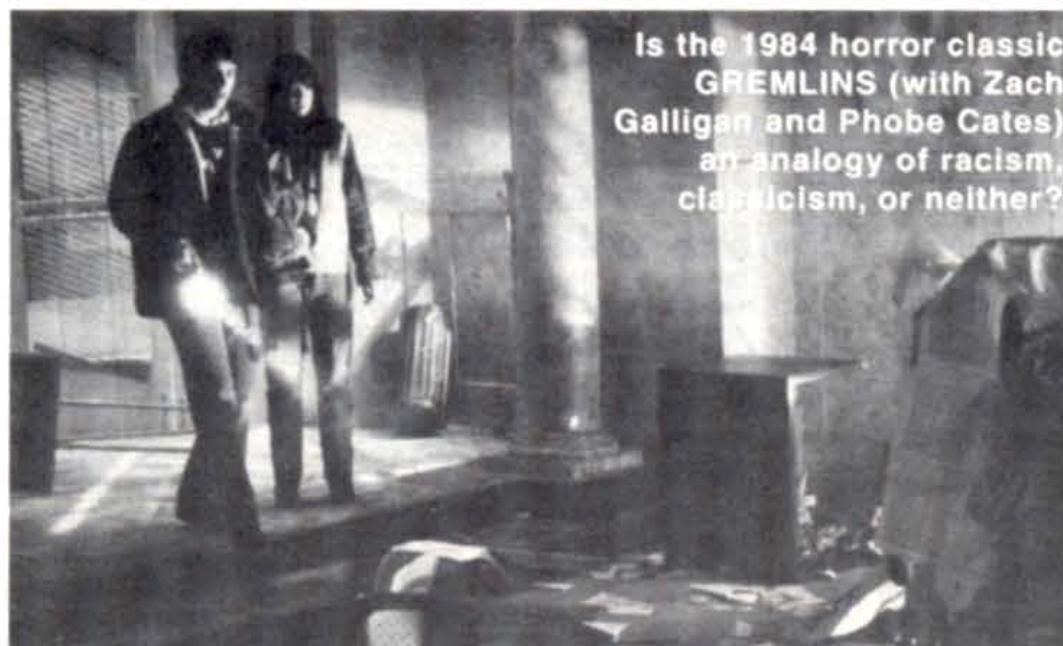
### DAS EXPERIMENT

Goldwyn, 2001, 114 mins. Director: Oliver Hirschbiegel. With: Moritz Bleibtreu, Andrea Sawatzki, Christian Berkel, Maren Eggert, Justus von Dohnanyi.

Oh those wacky, madcap Germans! Based on a novel by Mario Giordano, but also apparently on several real-life investigations which had similar, disastrous outcomes, the experiment of **DAS EXPERIMENT** is a behavioral study in which volunteers limn prisoners and guards in a correctional facility setting. The irony of this taking place in Germany—with both prisoners and their warders debating the appropriateness of unquestioning obedience to authority—does not escape Hirschbiegel. Bathing his scenes in harsh, industrial light and embuing each sequence with a sublimated intensity (his camera surveys an isolation chamber with near-fetishistic glee), the director nails the descent into fascism with such precision that it breaks past national boundaries and stereotypes. When things go horribly, horribly wrong, it's logical, terrifying, and damningly universal. ●●●● Dan Persons

### SCOOBY DOO

Warners, 2002, 87 mins. Director: Raja Gosnell. With: Freddie Prinze, Jr., Sarah Michelle Gellar, Matthew Lillard, Linda Cardellini.



Is the 1984 horror classic **GREMLINS** (with Zach Galligan and Phoebe Cates) an analogy of racism, classicism, or neither?

Taking a cue from his own 1999 superhero film, **THE SPECIALS**, screenwriter James Gunn has re-imagined the members of Mystery, Inc. as a bunch of dysfunctionals. Fred (Prinze) is a credit-hogging egomaniac (much like Strobe of **THE SPECIALS**), Daphne (Gellar) is enraged at having to always be the damsel in distress, Velma (Cardellini) is disappointed that her achievements are never recognized, and Shaggy (Lillard) admits he's just "the guy who carries the bags." Fed up with each other after years of mystery-solving (and Fred getting all the glory), the gang breaks up. Two years later, the mysterious Mr. Mondavius (Rowan Atkinson!) invites them to investigate strange goings-on at his theme park. What follows is sort of a slapstick take on **GHOSTBUSTERS**, as the gang zips all over the elaborate park that's almost an advertisement for itself.

Gunn's dialogue crackles with self-aware remarks and good one-liners, but the biggest problem with **SCOOBY DOO** is that it can't help but feel thrown together, a series of chase scenes interrupted by character moments. Director Raja Gosnell (**HOME ALONE 3**) seems to be making a kids movie, which is at odds with the more adult nature of Gunn's script. I can't help but wonder if, in post-production, a decision was made to make the film kid-friendly. Based on the audience I saw it with, perhaps that was a good idea.

●● Daniel Coyle

### THE SCORPION KING

Universal, 2002, 94 mins. Director: Chuck Russell. With: The Rock, Kelly Hu, Stephen Brand.

Dear Producers of **THE SCORPION KING**: I have just finished viewing your movie, and I must confess this was one of the more disappointing experiences I've had recently. It wasn't just that the action was ho-hum. It wasn't just that the plot felt as if it had been lifted from a Gene Kelly movie, but without the songs. It wasn't even that the acting wouldn't have cut it at a sixth-grade end-of-year program. No, I was disappointed in this movie for one reason only: It had no special effects. I've become so spoiled by movies like **THE MUMMY RETURNS** and **LORD OF THE RINGS** that when a movie falls into the fantasy-adventure category, I just assume I'm going to be struck dumb by creatures from the outer limits of some flaky graphic designer's imagination. The next time you're planning to do a movie where the major technical accomplishment is The Rock's pees, please include Meg Ryan as the co-star and call it something like **YOU'VE GOT MUSCLES**. Thanks!

● Dennis Kleinman

# CFQ Mail

## Angry White Jedi

Dennis Kleinman should have also looked at **AMERICAN GRAFFITI** before writing his article on racism in George Lucas' universe [*"Hands Across The Galaxy?,"* 34:3/4:46]. It reflects Lucas' upbringing in Modesto, CA, a stereotypical Fifties WASP small town which, being in California, probably had a Latino and Asian community but not many blacks—few, if any, of whom would have come within Lucas' orbit. There are no Asians in **GRAFFITI**, a couple of black extras in the sock hop sequence, and the only Latino was a member of a street gang led by Bo Hopkins.

Lucas' introduction to multiculturalism came when he went to USC, where he came under the influence of liberal professors, as well as Haskell Wexler and Verna Fields. The degree to which that influence affected him is questionable, as is seen in the somewhat tentative dramatic scenes in his first feature, **THX-1138**, in which the only black character is a literal one: a hologram (Don Pedro Colley) who escapes from a TV set into the "real" world. Though Lucas has expressed a preference for the kind of introspective, art house films he was introduced to in film school, the real Lucas is probably expressed in **GRAFFITI**, the first **STAR WARS**, and **THE RADIOLAND MURDERS**.

Incidentally, the Lando Calrissian character was introduced in **EMPIRE STRIKES BACK** because of complaints—reportedly by Ms. Fields, among others—over the lack of blacks in the original.

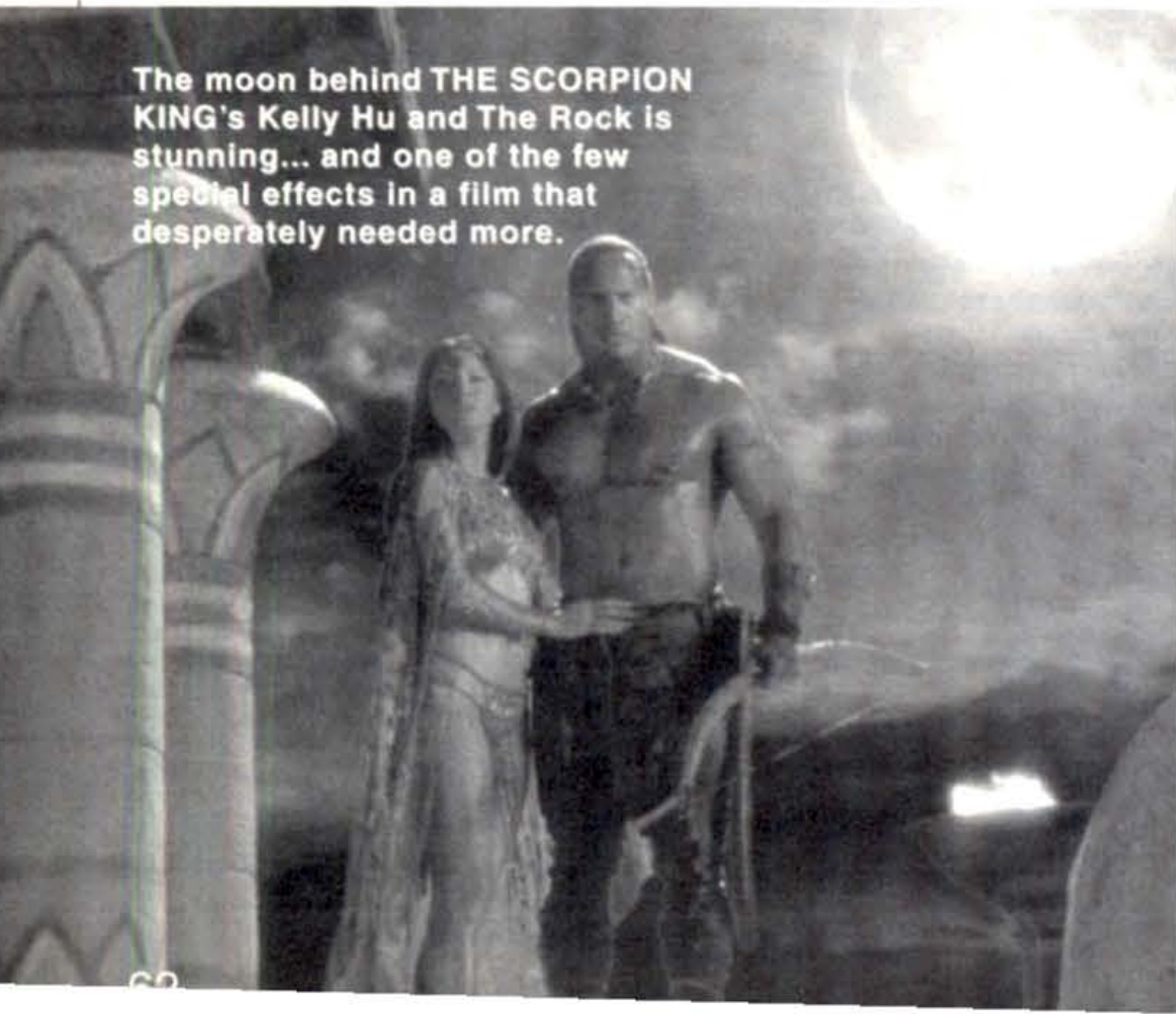
I disagree with Kleinman's claiming **GREMLINS** is a racist film. This is another case of confusing racism with classicism. Kleinman's comparison of the bad gremlins' actions to those of inner-city blacks is equally applicable to the attitudes [many had] toward poor whites, especially in the first third of the 20th Century.

And, in contrast, Kleinman might have mentioned the work of John Carpenter, who hails from a small college town in southern Kentucky. From his first official feature, **ASSAULT ON PRECINCT 13**, Carpenter has featured non-stereotypical depictions of blacks and other minorities in his films, as have Wes Craven, James Cameron, and Richard Donner.

Rick Mitchell

Film Historian/Director/Editor  
bigscreenist@earthlink.net

The moon behind **THE SCORPION KING**'s Kelly Hu and The Rock is stunning... and one of the few special effects in a film that desperately needed more.



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